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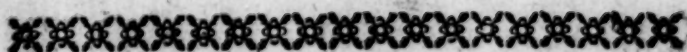
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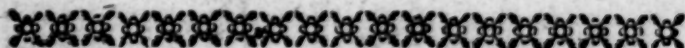
R O S A R A ;

OR, THE

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R O S A R A ;
OR, THE
A D V E N T U R E S
OF AN
A C T R E S S :
A
S T O R Y
FROM
R E A L L I F E

Translated from the Italian of PIETRO CHIARI. K

V O L. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. BALDWIN and S. BLADON, in
Paternoster Row.

MDCCLXXI.

ROSA OF THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTRESS



REAL LIFE

Translated from the Italian of Francesco Guicciardini

VOL. I

LONDON

Printed for H. Baskin, in
 Pall Mall
 1801

(v)

THE
TRANSLATOR'S
P R E F A C E

THE following history has more than one claim to the attention of the English. It is presumed, in the first place, to be intirely new to them: and, secondly, through the varity of incident, and diversity of character, it cannot fail to afford them much entertainment. But it has a still greater title to their regard. For, however wonderful and
a astonish-

astonishing many of the events, that are related, may appear ; yet they are not less true. And here let us stop to mention, that had not the translator been thoroughly assured of the verity of the original, he would never have sat down to have given a version of it in another language.

Readers of novels may be divided into two classes. The one consists of the sentimental, the susceptible, and the virtuous. If these can be sufficiently gratified where they meet, in a book of this kind, with chaste language, a probable narration, a just and varied exhibition of character, seasonable, concise, and moral observation ; in short, if a pen warmly



P R E F A C E. vii

ly employed in the cause of virtue can afford them any satisfaction, I flatter myself, that, to such persons, this work will be peculiarly agreeable.

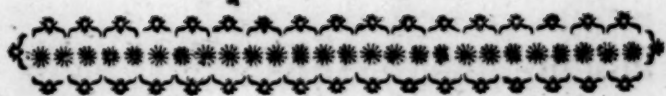
The second class is composed of the insensible, and indolent; who require a strong dose of the wild, and wonderful, to rouse them from their lethargic disposition. A strange mixture, or jumble, of characters and events must be prepared to suit their depraved palates. Perhaps, however, curiosity may stimulate some of this class to purchase this book; and, if, after they have perused a page or two, they should treat it with disdain, it is not to be wondered at. For being addressed only to minds capable of sentiment, how can it affect
such

such as are wholly wanting in that particular.

The Translator will say a little for himself; believing, that to spare self-adulation is not only modest, but generally prudent. For an author coining his own praise, never yet stamp'd sterling value on a sorry performance. The Translator, therefore, submits this version, not in the common cringing way of writers, to the *candour* of the public, but to their *reason* and *judgment*: and he only hopes that his language may be intelligible; and that he may appear to have done justice to his author.

The TRANSLATOR.





M E M O I R S
O F A N
A C T R E S S.



C H A P. I.

*Rosara's Reasons for writing these Memoirs;
Account of her Birth and Extraction.*



Promised to publish the memoirs of my life this year : and the world threatens me with its displeasure, if I do not keep my word. Female caprice brought me under this obligation to the public : but to acquit myself of

VOL. I.

B

such

2 MEMOIRS of

such an engagement with credit, requires all the steadiness and reflexion of a philosopher. It would be a happy thing, if, in the many inadvertent steps we take, it were always permitted us to recede! To drop, nevertheless, some enterprizes, is more hazardous, than a total failure in the execution of them.

Could I talk with mankind one by one, I doubt not but I could convince them, that it was not only allowable in me, but even a point of decorum, to decline the talk I have imposed upon myself, of giving to the world my numerous adventures. But, as this is impracticable; and as I can only address myself to society in general; I shall not regard the consequences of my publication: it is my duty to keep my word, tho' even at the expence of incurring some ridicule.

Perhaps



Perhaps, unfavourable conjectures have been formed of me, from the title which, I said, I intended for these memoirs. Some, it is probable, have given out, as they are not yet published, that I was ashamed to write a history of my own frailties. Others, putting a different construction upon this delay, may have conjectured, that I wanted to draw my own panegyric ; but, that my talents had proved unequal to my design.—Whatever arguments I might make use of to confute those critics, who may pass either of these judgments on me, how few should I gain over to the truth ! how little weight would my solid reasons have, in opposition to the tattle of malice, and the freaks of imagination ! I am not disposed to flatter myself : for I know the reader will find my life attended with such circumstances only as have happened to many others of my age and sex ; circum-

4 M E M O I R S of

stances, which neither inspire me with vanity, nor fill me with shame.

Some of my country-women wrote memoirs of their lives, which met with a favourable reception both in Italy, and elsewhere. Their success raised emotions of female envy in my breast; and determined me, likewise, to give an account of myself, that my name, as well as theirs, might be handed down to posterity.

As my profession, too, exposed me to a thousand adventures, a relation of them, I imagined, might afford entertainment to the gay fashionable reader. And, in the narration of the various circumstances of my history, I thought, I could there take the opportunity of conveying instruction to those minds, which are averse to it, when delivered in a graver and more scholastic manner.

These

These were the reasons for a promise which I could wish, at present, had never been made. But we do not always think maturely before we speak : and our thoughts themselves have not stability enough to secure us from regret.

To form the very title of a book, is not so easy a matter as some people may suppose : but to treat the subject of it with good sense, and proper spirit, is a difficult and arduous achievement. The world abounds with books, the titles of which are like the signs of inns ; which ennumerate the entertainment, but the passengers who put up there, find in the end none of those accommodations, which were promised them. Thus a pompous title page often sets forth very fine things : but if you pore your eyes out over the whole volume to which it is prefixed, you will not find a syllable

6 MEMOIRS *of*

of what you expected from the literary bill of fare. When a new ship is just ready to be launched, then, perhaps, and not sooner, her owners think of a name for her, to distinguish her from other vessels : — I am apt to imagine that many modern books are managed the same manner by their authors.

If the Italian ladies, who have lately written their own memoirs, had not answered the expectation of the public, by fulfilling the engagements of their title-pages, I should have had no scruple to put my abilities to the test, and endeavoured to acquit myself with more honour than they had done. But their productions, as far as I can find, have given full, and universal satisfaction; and that circumstance damps my hopes in the present undertaking; as I fear I shall not come off with equal credit. I do not question but their education,
 though

though they have not told us what it was, had made writing familiar to them: and their respective memoirs were not, I dare say, the first of their compositions. I need not declare to a world which knows me but too well, that my practice in writing has been confined to a few letters, dictated rather by necessity, or passion, than by any ambitious views of acquiring fame with the literati of the age. How then shall I set about the difficult task of writing my adventures with that agreeable ease, the want of which will sink their reputation, when they are compared with other works of the like nature! and yet how can I decline it, if no excuse of insufficiency will be admitted, after taking upon me such an engagement!

8 MEMOIRS *of*

We ought of two evils to chuse the least. I had rather, then, do my utmost, and be pitied, than refuse to do what I ought, and be despised. The dilemma to which I am reduced, is painful to self love. I must either break my word with the public, or make a poor figure in keeping it: but I am determined to sacrifice vanity to truth.—I have already my pen in my hand; and am going to display the history of my life; and throw myself once more upon the wide theatre of the world, in which fortune, some time ago, had kindly taken me. In the following pages, I shall appear in a very different light from what I ever did in the scenes of any drama. There the world beheld me in my best aspect; and in a point of view, which in a manner forced their approbation. Here they will see me through another medium: through such a one as the truth of my history will afford them. For

I will not violate sincerity to compliment myself.

A female writer is intitled to some indulgence, though she should not have the good fortune to please. But if she attempts to please by her veracity: while that veracity exhibits her in a disadvantageous light, she seems, in the eye of candour, to be intitled to praise, even for her weakness. Animated with this reflexion, I begin my work: and, instead of suing for the compassion of my readers, I only desire their confidence. When they are about to peruse this book, I beg they may not suppose that they are going to read a romance. No, I present them with an account of such events as really befell me: and which, tho' they may excite admiration through their appearance of extravagance, have no less claim to their attention from their veracity. I shall not spin these memoirs:

out to an immoderate length : neither do I intend to swell the contents of them tediously, or artfully ; but dwell only on such facts as are interesting and material.

I am now thirty years of age. But it is not my intention to print a journal of all that time : since I can scarcely say that I have lived in the world more than four of those years. For so long only have I been known in it. I might comprise the history of all the rest in observing, that I was born ; that I grew ; that I led my life like the majority of mankind, merely to be one in the number of human creatures ; and made some progress every day towards death. Confining myself, therefore, to the short space of four years, I shall speak but very briefly of the occurrences of the other part, that I may not weaken the effect of the striking objects in my picture ; and
fatigue

fatigue my reader with a chronicle of trifles, which cannot distinguish me from the lowest and most insignificant of my sex. If my name be known in the world, I am indebted for it to my profession, without which I should never have undergone the fate, that has cost me many sorrows : and may afford some useful instructions to those, who vouchsafe it their observation. On this profession, therefore, I must beg leave to expatiate : for on it alone depends the interesting anecdotes, or, to speak dramatically, the plot of my life.

Nature, in forming me, bestowed no remarkable charms : and, though our vanity is apt to sooth us with many delusions, yet on examining myself in my glass, I could never anticipate future conquests. My features, my complexion, and my person, have, indeed, nothing in them disagreeable, or disgusting

ing : but then they have nothing particular, or striking, that might have promised me a distinguished reception among men. The only uncommon endowment that I believed myself possessed of in my very early years, was an elevation of mind, superior, as it were, to myself : which was continually flattering me with the hopes of a noble fortune. As soon as I was capable of reflexion, I perceived myself surrounded with low and mortifying objects. But I had the satisfaction of spurning them away, in fancy, as not made for me : and a strong impulse often fired me with the presage of better things.

I have observed, by the process of experience, that this is the most powerful incitement to make us rise from nothing into eminence. Nature, who is the common mother of us all, cannot make us all equal in birth : for in that she depends

pend on fortune, who is either blind, and without reason; or, at least, certainly gives us no account why in her proceedings, she dubs a man a lord, or a plebeian, in such a preposterous manner. Yet kind nature neglects us not. She does all she can; and, indeed, all that she ought; to compensate for this disadvantage, by inspiring us with an ardent vigour of mind, which makes us feel her gifts, and avail ourselves of them in spite of the capriciousness of Fortune. He who is strongly inspired with these feelings, and exerts himself with perseverance, generally removes every obstacle, that stands betwixt him, and the object he has in view. A person born in a cottage is not mean, provided he soars above his condition: while darting from obscurity, by the force of sentiment and talents, he asserts his inherent privileges; and vigorously disputes the precedence with his fellow beings.

Call

Call this ambition, or what you please, it is always laudable, till it exceeds the bounds of virtue. To this natural throb for fame, is the world indebted for those exalted souls of antient and modern times, who have conferred on it its most substantial worth, and its brightest splendour. If Providence has given us this animated frame, we may laugh at the blunders of chance: for we have it hourly in our power to correct her irregularities. If any person be ashamed of his humble parentage, let him not spend his time in idle lamentation: but let that very shame incite activity. Let him soar from the ground; and ennoble his birth by his actions. If by them he raise himself a name in the world, his birth will either be more spoken of; or it will only be mentioned to give a foil to the livelier, and brighter colours of his life.

I speak thus from experience : for I have not the confidence to give myself out for a descendant of *Æneas*. But the esteem, with which I have been favoured by society, has relieved the pain that I felt for my extraction. I would here enter without a blush into a minute detail of my pedigree, if I knew more of it than I do. When I first became acquainted with myself, I had a very confused idea of my parents ; and did little more than conclude, that I was not sprung, like a Druid, from an Oak. I found myself in the hands of strangers, but very discreet people, who treated me like a daughter: and, therefore, I cared little who, or where, my parents were. What I know of them, I learned since : and it is proper that I should here give an account of it ; because some lights necessary to the understanding of these memoirs, and the extenuation of my own imperfections, must be deduced from their characters.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Character of Rosara's Parents. Source of her Adventures deduced from thence.

MY father was one of those men, who, finding their circumstances narrow, fall upon a thousand schemes to get a support. His life was a scene in which he played a hundred different parts: for he had not steadiness enough to obtain that good fortune which he was always eagerly in quest of. As he was ever passing from one extreme to another, his occupations were very temporary; as he soon grew alike tired of them all, and was extremely mutable in his desires. In every country to which he travelled, (and he visited several) he took a different name; and
appeared

appeared in a different character. When I was jesting with him in the more serene moments of my life, I sometimes told him, that I was the daughter of a Proteus, who metamorphosed himself every moment.—I might have given my wretched birth any air I thought proper. — I might have ingeniously called myself the daughter of a merchant, a gentleman, an Italian, a foreigner, a rich, or a poor person: because in fact my father had cut all these different figures in the world. There happened once, in a very large company, to be some persons who had seen my father personate the physician at Naples, the lawyer at Messina, the bone-setter at Capua, the scholar at Rome, the footman at Milan, the mountebank at Turin, and the prompter to the opera in the theatres of Florence, and Pisa. In all those stations, he acquitted himself but poorly; and continued in them but a short time.

time. For ever struggling with want, he applied himself to every thing : because agreeably and prudently he could apply himself to nothing. In his first exhibition of himself, he had a presence of mind, and a frankness of manner, which imposed upon those with whom he conversed; and gave him a temporary credit : but he wanted a fund of knowledge, and talents, to fix himself afterwards in the good opinion of mankind.

In talking of himself, he sometimes, even deceived me : though I had been taught by long experience to give no credit to what he said. Equally ready to make large promises without ever keeping his word; to undertake every thing, without executing any thing; to do, and undo, in the same breath; and to make an assertion in one minute, and contradict it in the next. He shewed not the least blush, or apprehension.

hension, lest his falsehood should be detected : as if the world was blind enough not to see his impostures; or was too much awed by his importance, to check him with its reproaches.

He did, indeed, see some rays of propitious fortune : because many people suffer themselves to be seduced by first appearances. But such lucky hits, instead of composing him, and making him discreet, intoxicated his weak brain : and his own giddiness plunged him again into adversity. Observing, that in the most rugged circumstances, he always found some relief in the credulity, and candour of others, he grew more careless, and rash in sacrificing present advantages to visionary plans of future greatness. Presumptuous to an excess, and imagining that he should one day infallibly be famous, I doubt not but he portrayed in the delirium of his fancy,

fancy, that he was so necessary to the world, the Kings of Europe would some time, or other, go to war, to determine the possession of him for their minister. According to him, all men were blind: and as they did not endeavour to know him, they were not worthy of him.

Amidst these magnificent ideas he held a daily, and cruel conflict with hunger, cold, and want: but he still maintained his inward tranquillity. For in the contemplation of his prodigious abilities, he was rich, great, and happy. His invention was exercised every day in hunting for a dinner, or supper: and, if he had at any time secured a day's good living, the world might go to wreck: it was of no consequence: he had time enough to think of its case: to collect, and cement its scattered fragments.

Such

Such was the character of this flighty man, who thought himself the wisest person in the world; because his wild projects were sometimes approved of. What he aimed at, in all his undertakings, was to live without the trouble of any application. This view often made him think of repairing his bad circumstances by putting himself in a situation, which in the end would be actually worse, though he foresaw not its effects. Finding himself once under great difficulties, and unable to extricate himself by all his dexterity, he thought he could not provide better for his necessities than by taking a wife; at a time even when he could not support himself. Such kind of marriages are but too frequent. There are some who, if they can but patch up their affairs for the present with a wife's fortune, never give themselves leave to think of the inconveniencies, which must of course follow such a precipitate step.

When

When we must either drink or choak, we are little sensible of the brackishness of Sea-water. If women do not examine with circumspection the matches that are offered them, they may be insnared by men, who are wholly indifferent, how much misery they entail upon a wife, provided they may procure for themselves a little respite from their original poverty; or from the distress, which their licentious practices have brought upon them.

My Father conducted himself in this manner. For he married my mother to repair his shattered circumstances, without considering what would become either of her or of me, who were to suffer the consequences of this indiscretion. As he thought of nothing in marriage but augmenting his finances, the first woman with a fortune that offered was to him the best: and fraud was the only

ly engine he made use of to accomplish his design. For he did not endeavour to gain her by more worthy means. The little fortune she brought him did not last the whole time of her first pregnancy : and as I came into the world at this melancholy period, I flatter myself, that I was no sooner born than compassionated even by the unthinking mortals who gave me being.

Perhaps my father could not stand the tender sight. For he left my mother and myself a few days after I was born ; and we received no account of him for a considerable time after. In this pious light let me place his cruel desertion of us. For a father is always a father : and a certain reverence is due to him, even in his wildest irregularities. Heaven, who inspires me with this sentiment is my awful witness, that, in drawing this character of him for the eyes of the public,

in

in colours very unfavourable to him, and possibly disadvantageous to myself, I have felt all that compunction which a daughter can feel for such a deed. But, Oh! self-love! thou strong, thou busy, thou constant spring of human actions. I thought myself under a necessity of making him culpable to procure approbation for myself, by speaking the truth. The abandoning a wife, to whom he would have owed much, had he employed the money he got with her to the re-establishment of his affairs, was a crime, which ever after seemed to hasten the divine vengeance upon his guilty head. To abandon an infant but a few days old at the breast of her mother, whom he had already plundered, and who was very unfit to redress her calamities and mine, was a heavy misfortune to me: of which I have long felt the effects; and round which the clew of my adventures is necessarily wound.

Perhaps

Perhaps, they would not have been such as they were, if I had been blessed with one of those mothers to whom children owe more than to a father. There are women in the world, of a spirit superior to their sex ; who see, as I may say, in the midst of darkness ; who can be calm, in the midst of a storm ; and even active to gain a port in safety. My mother, alas ! was not of this character : for, to give you her picture in miniature, she was just as inanimate and spiritless, as my father was alert and enterprizing. Had any one been desirous to have made a match between two persons, of tempers diametrically opposite, he might have travelled over the world before he would have found a pair so fit for his purpose. Chance, whimsical, extravagant chance, brought about this marriage, which, however, seemed rather the effect of long, and

industrious contrivance, exerted to excite public laughter.

My mother was of very low stature, and ill-shaped; she had nothing tolerable about her but her complexion. I know not what her education had been; but her manners were altogether plebeian. Her tongue was extremely voluble, and she spoke whatever came uppermost. She dealt out compliment, and rudeness with equal unconcern, as if she had been incapable of distinguishing between good and evil. She took pleasure in enumerating my failings, nay, she even frequently insulted me without the least provocation.— Her mere love of slander made her forget the dictates of nature, which bids us cast a veil over the defects of others, whenever they redound in any degree, to their shame. Were I praised in her hearing, that praise immediately

ately called forth her bitterest, and most injurious calumny. Were I ever desirous of keeping any of my intentions secret, on that very account, she was sure to disclose them. Did I conjure her to favour me with a truce from disputes, with a little quiet, with a little solitude? she wanted no stronger motive to wrangle with, and plague me the more.

Whether this absurd behaviour proceeded from envy of my natural advantages, or from imbecility of mind, which made the difference betwixt us too high a discovery for her; certain it is, I had always in my mother, an enemy at my side, who bore an implacable resentment against my happiness. This was the point of view in which I saw her every day, and which every day pierced my heart. As for her other faults, which were very nume-

rous, I looked upon them as trifles, in comparison with her want of natural affection. A lover of idleness, and totally unfit for any employment, it was no wonder that she was unwilling to do any thing; and that she marred every work she put her hand to. If she reached a glass, she inevitably broke it, in replacing it, either through negligence or design. If you begged of her any little domestic service, which obliged her to quit the spot where she supinely stood with her arms across, she upbraided you with not suffering her to enjoy a moments ease, and loaded you with her imprecations.

But by her account of the matter, I was rather her mistress, than her child. And she always had the command of tears, ready to enforce her complaints. She was of a disposition diametrically opposite to mine, for
while

while I was inspired with ideas far superior to my condition, she entertained the most groveling sentiments. Her favourite amusement was to stand at the door from morning to night, and converse with every neighbour, however mean. If I expressed any disapprobation of such conduct, even in the gentlest manner, she, and her respectable companions, at their next meeting, were sure to bring my whole life to a minute and severe trial.

Though when I arrived at maturer years, and improved my situation in life, I took all the care of her, which gratitude dictated to me, yet, I never had the satisfaction to see her content; and she forgot that she had always done every thing in her power to render me unhappy. So little was I indebted to her for my education, that the state in which I am at present, is in

consequence of her cruelty. Let me observe here that, when I was grown up and saw her again, I did not know her to be my mother, and when she convinced me that she was, a deep blush overspread my face; I shall not determine whether upon her account, or my own.

My mother left me in my tender years to shift for myself; so that when I was at the age of ten, I found myself in the hands of people who were not at all related to me, but who, took as much care of me, as if I had been their daughter. If I had not previously informed my readers of the strange conduct of my parents, my education would partake a great deal of the marvellous. My sincerity however, in unfolding my origin, will, I trust, procure me credit for the rest of my narrative. I am fully satisfied that birth confers

confers no merit; and when I propose to write a history of myself, nobody will expect a geneaology of one of the most illustrious families in Europe. This being allowed, let any one who favours these memoirs with a perusal, consider attentively from what an obscure beginning, I have mounted up to my present advancement: and I think he will not refuse me his most benign approbation; since I have built my reputation and my fortune, on the honourable foundation of virtue.

C H A P.

C 4

C H A P. III.

Rosara enters into a Company of Rope-Dancers.—The Progress she makes in that Profession; and her Situation with respect to the Company, her Master, and the Public.

FORSAKEN by my father, while in the cradle, and not a long time after, by my mother; I asked alms one day of an honest man at Naples, who was humane enough to take me to his house. This person was the head of a company of rope-dancers, who exhibited their art to that populous city with no small success. What he saw in me to move his compassion I know not: Perhaps my shape and manner, made him imagine, that I might be of some service to him in his profession: Perhaps the pure humanity of his disposition

position prompted him to do me good, and to screen me from the cruel disasters, to which a young female, in such a situation as mine, is exposed. However that might be, I found myself at once removed from poverty to plenty; and the new kind of life which I began to lead with him, transported me so highly, that it made me even forget my mother. A girl actuated by the impulse of youth, and bold through inexperience, would rather follow a calling of this nature, though at the hazard of her neck, than sit in ease and safety at her stocking, or her loom. I, in particular, as if my composition had been of mercury, could not endure to be out of action, for a single moment. The natural thoughtlessness of that age, did not suffer me to make any serious reflections; nor, had I reflected ever so maturely,

turely, would the dangers of that vocation have deterred me from it.

I own, when I afterwards revolved the affair in my mind, I thought I might have engaged in some better employment: — Our vanity is as powerful as our other passions. The *good*, and the *great*, soon strike the eye even of those who have but a confused idea of them, because they see them at a distance. Had I become the first rope-dancer, in Europe, I still saw very clearly that I should never be upon a very respectable footing, in a world, where so many made a superior figure in a hundred other professions. Besides the pursuing this trade, was a thorny path, which my particular circumstances rendered more painful. However, to live we must do something: Reasonable people will not lay to our charge the caprices of fortune.

There

There are individuals in every way of life, who instead of being depressed by it, do honour to it. Our memory is more eminently characterized by our moral qualities, than by our necessities, and occupations. It is not always in our power to chuse one profession, in preference to another; but on ourselves alone it depends, to signalize ourselves, in any profession, by virtuous actions.

These were the considerations that made a cast of life supportable to me, in some respects, which, in others, only humbled my vanity. I will not presume to say what dexterity I had acquired in my profession, during the five years I applied to it with all possible diligence and application: However, I may venture to declare, that when I was fifteen years of age, I had made a considerable progress, for I perceived, that I was distinguished from
the

the other girls of our company; and our master took particular notice of me. As we went from city to city, in the kingdom of Naples, and the Island of Sicily, in the course of our business, I met with very warm civilities from those with whom I happened to be acquainted. But this, from the little understanding I then had, I vainly attributed to my own deserts. There are two means of forming a judgment in our intercourse with others; I had not then acquired a knowledge of myself, and a knowledge of the world.

The fatal moments of experience arrived in time: to my misfortune they arrived too soon; for they cost me afterwards many years of sorrow. How sweet, how much to be envied are our first unreflecting innocent years! in which we are exempt from a thousand pains! and how foolish,
how

how inconsiderate are we, to precipitate, as it were, by our wishes a maturer age, which brings us under the dominion of those passions that prove our ruin, and makes us martyrs to ourselves. How melancholy the notions of humanity, that arise whenever I reflect on the deplorable inconsistency of our sentiments, which are so often mutually opposing, and destroying each other. Every day we shudder with the fear of death, which we would always keep off at a distance, and at the same time, we hasten it by a continual discontent with our present state, and with a longing for the future, from the uncertain hope of bettering our condition. While we are still boys, and girls, and subject to the rigorous discipline of our parents, we think a maturer time of life will never arrive, when we shall be at our own disposal. As soon as a girl reaches
this

this golden period, she wishes for a husband, and to be dependant upon his will. When she has got him she grows weary of him too, and ardently desires to be relieved from her bondage. Finding herself, at length, by her desires, and by a course of years, carried forward into an age more advanced than she could wish, she would fain start back, and grow younger; and thus her whole life is wasted in wishing for that futurity which she fears, and in soliciting the arrival of those years, which, when they were viewed by her at a remoter distance, filled her with sadness and horror.

I have, likewise, found within myself, that I had my share of these chimeras. But it is too soon yet to display them. If, till fifteen years of age, I might say I was content with my lot, though I did not think it the most eligible

gible in the world: from that time I was so disgusted with it, that scarce a moment of my life passed, in which I did not desire to change my situation.

Our company performed at Palermo with a greater run of good fortune than usual; and my vanity flattered me that I was the chief cause of this success; because I was caressed by every body. Indeed, the progress I made for six years in my laborious employment, had formed me into considerable perfection for a girl of my age: yet the master of our company gave me to understand, every day, by his gentle reproof, that I was not such a prodigy of art as the approbation I met with made me presume. Whether he did this to keep me modest in the midst of applauses, or to soothe a daughter of his who was brought up to the same business, and whom he was loath to have hurt by a comparison;

son: I well remember that his remonstrances had very little force, when I confronted them with the approbation of the public; and in proportion as the latter endeared me to others, the former made him odious to me.

Self-love is the most seducing of all orators. Where our vanity is interested, the authority of many against one, will not have its usual force. If the public had not applauded me; and my master even alone had praised my cleverness, I should doubtless have preferred his judgment to that of the whole world. Because I was in vogue with the public, and was humbled only by him, I concluded within myself, that the opinion of the multitude was the justest of the two, and that my master's was merely actuated by malignity and envy.

Thus the same object displays different

rent colours, according to the medium of passion through which it is seen. Every dancer and musician, who exhibits his art to public criticism upon the stage, cries up to the stars the good taste of his spectators, if he happens to be praised by them; and, on the contrary, pronounces them fools and blockheads if he has not the good fortune to deserve their applause. I likewise, in my case, believed firmly, that the City of Palermo did me justice; and deemed, as malice and imposture, the domestic rattle which every day filled my ears; and was designed to persuade me, that the success I enjoyed was purely owing to the passions of a young gentleman of Palermo, who had formed, by his powerful connexions, a party for me, and extorted in my favour the sentiments of the town.

This intelligence appeared to me a
most

most unquestionably story; and so much the more as I had never observed that I had a patron of this character amongst our spectators. Entirely absorbed in the great scheme of improving myself in dancing on the rope, I may truly say that I had not given my personal charms place enough in my thoughts to hope for any conquests from them, I was, as yet, too simple and unexperienced in the wide school of human œconomy, to imagine, that a girl of my years could make herself of more consequence with the men by the lightning of her eyes than the nimbleness of her feet. I fancied the applause of Palermo was directed to my skill; and I was a good deal surprised when it was told me that it was a tribute paid to my beauty: in short, the grand question was, whether I was an excellent dancer, or a captivating girl. But if people should ask me which of these two characters most

al-

allured my vanity, I could not resolve them, because I had not as yet brought them into competition in my mind.

Experience was wanting to decide this important doubt: for I did not think of making a trial, as I had not perceived that my face had produced the least effect. Our company was always founding this young gentleman in my ears, and teizing me about his protection; but as I had never observed it, nor knew who he was, I looked upon all this talk to be an idle pretext, which envy laid hold of, to depress me. In the companies which I shall call theatrical, to comprize them all impartially under one term, envy is an epidemical distemper, so universal and inevitable, that they are every one of them infected with it; nay, I may venture to assert, that without it they cannot associate, nor continue long together. Here are ma-

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ny persons, of different abilities, and different characters, constantly put to a painful competition, in which their fortunes are at stake. This rivalry makes them love those of the same fraternity proportionably less as they are more stimulated by nature to love themselves : as soon as we become afraid that the success of another will be of prejudice to our advancement, we necessarily look upon him with an evil eye, we endeavour to obscure him, and we throw that stain upon his lustre which most gratifies our passion. A singer, a player, or a dancer, may be a prodigy in her calling ; but because her companions look upon themselves to be prodigies, though they are not esteemed such in the world's eye, they are for bringing her down to their level ; and therefore attribute the praise that she receives, to any other cause rather than to her perfection in the art. But they do not stop
here;

here : they engage the passions of others to coincide with their own. Hence flow the applauses of a set of prejudiced and infatuated gallants, who confound the *good* with the *striking*, and, consequently, do justice neither to the one, nor to the other. Hence the universal approbation of a city, not produced by merit, but by amours, by humour, or perhaps by compliances yet more vile and scandalous.

Thus is envy wont to obscure the talents of my sex, and of my profession. Thus, I thought, it likewise attempted to obscure mine, by giving out that I had admirers in Palermo, to whom I was indebted for the encomiums of the public : and yet it spoke truth, though I was altogether in the dark, with regard to the fact ; nor could I then possibly know what I afterwards became acquainted with. The rigorous
jealousy

jealousy with which I was watched by the head of our company, kept me entirely secluded from any commerce with the world. My genius was not yet sufficiently indulged by cunning to take in objects at a distance from the senses; and I should never have discovered that I had a lover, had not my eyes been opened by an accident which occasioned me the greatest confusion, and gave rise to the most painful vicissitudes of my life.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

An odd Accident befalls Rosara while she is dancing on the Rope, and brings her acquainted with Lord B. for whom she begins to conceive a Fondness.

WE performed, according to custom, one evening at Palermo, before a very great croud of spectators. As all of our company had some merit, they likewise attained the applause that was due to it. But the expectations, in general, were turned upon me; and I fancied they thought the time long till I should issue forth, and be distinguished from the rest by the most lively demonstrations in their favour. When it came to my turn to present myself, I was received with all the loud acclamations my vanity made me look for. If a blush at that time flew to my cheeks,
and

and overspread them, it was the effect of my blood, which mounted in my veins more briskly than usual, by the inexpressible pleasure I felt in finding myself so much valued by others.

Those, who have dedicated themselves to public exhibition, ought not to be deceived by these premature applauses, for they are not always sincere and true. How can we think an encomium just that is not preceded by some action of ours which may prove us worthy of it to those who confer it? The joyous acclamation, with which a full room resounds, as soon as one of us appear in the performance, may, no doubt, be the result of antecedent merit; but it may, likewise, be the effect of a ridiculous prepossession which that very moment arises from fancy; or from the cabal of a few, who are determined to extort applause for us, whether it be our due

due or not. Great stress is generally laid upon these acclamations by people in our station : and once they told very far with me. But time has weaned me from many prejudices : and, therefore, I think it my duty to persuade others to get rid of them, by my example; unless they chuse to make themselves ridiculous.

The dress we put on to dance on the rope is known to every body. It is compact and short, to give us freedom of action : but at the same time it is so contrived as to correspond with the rules of decency. A pair of drawers of silk, or other fine stuff, coming no lower than half the thighs, where they draw together, and sit close, leaves our legs at full liberty ; in which all our dexterity consists. Thus equipped, I mounted the rope, ballanced myself, and was preparing by my position to gratify the

public expectation. A profound silence prevailed through the whole place : and I began already to merit its wonder and applause : when, in the midst of a spring, my drawers came loose : and, sliding downwards, obliged me to quit my equilibrium, and run the risk of breaking my neck, that I might not neglect what I owed to modesty.

My hands immediately flew to my waist : my face struck fire : I knew not where I was : and, undoubtedly, my good tutelary genius took charge of me in my descent, and secured me from harm. My blushes were increased by the tumultuous cries of the people. In a numerous assembly there are different ways of thinking. The low, ignorant vulgar, know not the bounds of decorum : and the tenderest subjects are a foundation for their licentious mirth. How many were there of my spectators,
who

who reaped more pleasure from that unlucky accident, and my confusion, than the finest dance in the world could have afforded them? Their joyful riot lasted a considerable time: but I was not long exposed to it. For I immediately jumped from the rope, and retired into a chamber at a little distance. As the noise and laughter of the house grew louder, my confusion likewise increased; which ended, soon after, in a flood of tears.

Let not this appear strange in a person of my occupation: as we are not generally over delicate in like circumstances. Let the reader call to mind what I have already remarked, that I had thus far been kept at a jealous distance from any communication with the world: and for want of social intercourse was not yet hardened against its brutality. Nature spoke to me in so

clear and strong a language, that human depravity was not authorized in my breast, by the numbers whom it had infected. The least violation of decorum seemed to me an outrage, that merited universal disapprobation. I thought this theatrical riot a savage insult upon maiden bashfulness: and all remonstrances were urged in vain to bring me again on the stage.

The spectators, with repeated clapping, recalled me to the performance: and our whole company who were assembled to console me, pressed me much to comply with them. Some called me a poor-spirited creature, for suffering myself to be disconcerted with such a trifle. But I was deaf to all their arguments, and was only confirmed in my refusal by them. I cannot say, at present, what reflexions then operated in my imagination, to keep me obstinate in my resolution;

lution : because the fact is now almost obliterated in my memory ; or like an object viewed afar off. Perhaps I deemed the laugh of the mob a derision of this accident ; and resolved within myself to punish them, and avenge myself of their insolence, by an opposition to their will. Perhaps, too, the natural timidity of my sex aggravated the evil to my imagination ; and made me culpable in my own eyes for an occurrence, which in justice could be attributed only to chance.

The truth is, that by presenting myself again to the eyes of the public, I was afraid that I should blush more than before : and that fear was enough to make me hold my determination against performing any more that evening, in spite of the warmest exhortations. The affair grew so serious to me, that my sobs and tears would have softened the

most obdurate heart: though the people about me began to threaten, that, if I would not gratify the public out of complaisance, I should be made to do it by compulsion. Some one stepped forth in the mean time to entertain them in my stead: and the company broke up that night without receiving any further amusement from me. For my own obstinacy was more prevalent with me, upon that occasion, than the acclamations and uproar of all Palermo.

My grief (which may seem a little ridiculous) lasted for some days after: and no one presumed any longer to expostulate with me upon the subject. They might, indeed, have combated my sullenness with very clear, and strong arguments; they might have laid before me the disadvantages it would bring upon the master, as well as the other performers of our company, by disgust-

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ing a city so well affected to us; and where we had been such considerable gainers. As for me, in the agitation of mind, under which I then laboured, I was very ready not only to sacrifice bread, but even life itself, rather than expose myself again to the eyes of a body of spectators, by whom I thought I had been treated with indignity; and put to shame. To rid my imagination of this humour, persons of condition, who were not at all connected with us, were obliged to interfere: and the more willingly interested themselves in persuading me; as my repugnance seemed to them the effect of delicacy and uncommon virtue.

The abject libertines, as they thought people of my profession incapable of a sense of honour, had pronounced me a ridiculous prude: and their sentence, instead of overcoming my resentment,

inflamed it still more ; and riveted me in my melancholy ideas. All people do not think alike. Some do not hold persons of my profession in the same difesteem with others : but think that particulars among us are endowed with a sense of honour. Some such humane gentlemen, moved to pity, by my situation, agreed amongst themselves that they would endeavour to make me change my resolution : and, that they might have an opportunity of conversing with me freely, as they thought would be requisite, at their desire, Lady A. one of the principal ladies of Palermo, sent her chariot for me next morning, and invited me to dine with her.

I saw the drift of this invitation : but I was under a necessity of accepting it. The confusion I was in, at the time, did not allow me to observe, that my companions whispered about it in secret :
but

but, if I even had observed it, I should not have discovered the mystery. I went thither, accompanied with our master, who always kept with me; and who was more concerned than all the rest, at the removal of my determination not to perform any more. I found, at Lady A——'s, a great many people of quality, who saluted me in the kindest manner. They talked of nothing before dinner, but me; and the misfortune that had befallen me the preceding evening. This was a sure way to make me blush: but my very blushes gave pleasure, and operated in my favour: for one of the gentlemen in company payed me a compliment upon them; and begged of his friends to wave the subject, that I might not be kept any longer in pain.

I remember I heard, on that occasion, some broken and interrupted hints,

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that

that this gentleman was my patron; but I did not pay much regard to them: because my attention was taken off, by the civility of so many people; which I was obliged to return as well as I could: I knew not, then, who the young gentleman was, that espoused my interest more warmly than the rest: but I have since known him well. He was somewhat older than myself: his manners were extremely polite, and obliging: the form of his face, and complexion were fine, yet manly: but his air, by which he was most eminently distinguished, spoke a tender and elevated soul. I cannot exactly say what impression he then made upon my mind: because this was the first time I was put upon a footing in conversation with people of a rank so superior to my own; and, consequently, their presence rather inspired me with awe than confidence. However, I must own, I beheld him

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with

with more pleasure than any other person : and in a short time I beheld him with more ardour than at first. Perhaps, the evident partiality, with which he declared himself in my favour, made him dearer to me than the rest. The person who praises us, infallibly recommends himself to our good graces. The proud themselves are bent by good offices ; therefore it is not to be wondered at, if I took a secret liking to the person, who scarce dropped a word in that company, but what, in some shape or other, tended to sooth my vanity.

While we were at table, which was a considerable time, I had full opportunity to remark, more exactly, the civilities of the person who took such particular notice of me. He could not have been more assiduous to a lady of the first rank : and, indeed, there were two ladies at table who made that observation,

fervation; either in jest or earnest: tho' I am apt to think in the latter way; out of envy to my good fortune, and by way of reproach to the gentlemen, who sat next them, for their negligence. The genteel manner in which I was treated by this young gentleman, who was close by me; and the delicate and temperate mirth of the rest of the company, on that occasion, made me, at length, suspect that I was the object of their ridicule. My timorous inexperience led me to imagine, that so much regard was never shown a girl of my station, without some sinister, and ungenerous view. The sting which my vanity received, at this thought, put me so much upon my guard, and threw me back into so shy a circumspection, that it was soon taken notice of, by the company: and I was gently reprimanded for it. Here again the young gentleman, whom they called my patron, took my

my part, attributing this reserve to modesty; and defending it by his highest approbation. The whole time we were at dinner passed in this chearfulness: and, I must needs say, I thought it very long; because I was taken out of my sphere; and suffered a painful constraint, and anxiety. When I took my leave of Lady A——, and was going to return to my inn, my young gentleman again accosted me; and asked me, during the little conversation we had together, if I would do him the honour to dance again, in public, that evening? I thought a negative was too harsh, upon the politeness shown me: and by reason of a certain perplexity and disorder, with which that very politeness had affected me, I had not courage enough to answer him in the affirmative. I left him with an internal tumult and emotion, which presented him ever before my eyes: and

as I could not, in parting with him, give a satisfactory answer to his question, I grew anxious, and fearful, that he would think me ungrateful, and despise me. This was an impression to which my mind had, hitherto, been a stranger: but it soon became a strong passion; of which I did not, for some time, consider, nor conceive the effect. Love has its thorns, as well as its flowers: but young people are heedless; and its flowers are more perceptible, and attractive to the eye.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

*Rofara's Resolution to beg of Lord B—
to difcontinue his Favour towards her.
——He makes her Presents, which
greatly affects her.*

AS foon as I returned from Lady
A——'s, to my own habitation, I
thought I was quite a different being
from myfelf. My mind was fo difturbed,
that fomething feemed, to me, to be
wanting: and yet I could not pro-
nounce what that fomething was. Tho'
I was much taken up with employ-
ment at home; yet the young gentle-
man, who had kept near me all that
day; and who had publicly diftinguifh-
ed me, by his complaifance, was ever
prefent in my imagination. Neverthe-
lefs

less, I could not assign the cause of this uneasiness to his account. When I recollected that he had desired me to conquer my reluctance, and dance that evening, I found I was not so much inclined to hesitate, as before : and so strongly was I disposed to oblige him, that I almost wished it in my power to do him some more essential favour.

Among many other unaccountable perplexities, I regretted extremely, that I only knew him by sight; and that I was not at all acquainted with his name, and quality. How easily might this have been effected, with a little presence of mind! I might have got the intelligence I was desirous of, out of himself; or I might easily have procured it from some of the family. When, therefore, on the one hand I provoked myself severely for my past stupidity; on the other, I thoroughly forgave myself,

self, for my present anxiety. I had to do with people, whom I knew to be more dexterous and artful than myself. I called to mind a thousand sneers, which had been thrown out against me, with regard to a patron, it seems, I had, whom I knew nothing of: I was, indeed, by many arguments, led to think, that this might be the very man, of whom I was wanting some information. I was determined, however, it should not be known, that I took the least notice of his assiduities, lest it might be supposed as an affair of gallantry betwixt us. I put myself on my guard against criticisms yet more severe, and malicious. In short, as I was not, myself, well acquainted with my state of mind, I was resolved not to make the least discovery of it to others; and I rather chose to keep out at sea, at the mercy of the winds and waves, than stand in for a harbour, full of rocks, and shelves,
to

to the entrance of which I was a stranger.

Agitated with these sentiments, I mounted the rope that evening: which was to be the basis either of my glory, or my shame. The acclamations of the public, soon banished any pain I felt, on account of the unlucky accident that had befallen me the preceding day. But my destiny threw another in my way; not, indeed, so odd as the former, but attended with more sensible and durable consequences. I had not looked twice round upon my spectators, before my eye caught the young gentleman, who had made so deep an impression upon my mind. He was but at a little distance from the stage: and his eyes were fixed earnestly upon me. As soon as my looks met his, my frame underwent a revolution; which even threw a momentary mist before my eyes. I re-

recovered myself by degrees: but, in spite of all my endeavours not to look at him, my eyes involuntarily fell upon him; and would have dwelt with pleasure there, had not the constraint I was under, from our own people, and the reflexions of prudence, every now and then, made me turn them away.

I never happened to look toward him during our performance that evening, but I found him regarding me with a gentle smile, and encouraging me both with his voice, and hands to gain universal applause. He had a number of gentlemen along with him, who seconded his kind offices, and gave me very sensible proofs, that they were warm espousers of my interest. Then it was I perceived for the first time, that the rumours of my companions had some foundation; though I was totally innocent of the fact.

fact. What a strange affair is this, I immediately said within myself,—— and I repeated it afterwards, when I was left only to my own thoughts—— What a strange affair is this:—— What can be the meaning of the assiduities of this gentleman, whom I never saw before yesterday; and who gives no reason for his conduct.

Had I fallen upon the proper method of resolving my doubts, I would have asked myself the meaning of my eagerness to become acquainted with him; and why, after having seen him at the house of Lady A—— I could not get him out of my head. —— Had I known that my uneasiness was the beginning of a passion, I should have assigned the same motives for his behaviour, and marked the circumstances of it with more justness.

I was not then such a mistress in the art of love, as to my cost I was afterwards; and I was intitled to some pity, if I did not then understand human nature. Instead of availing myself of the favourable occasions which my good fortune presented, I was absorbed by it, in useless wonder. Nay, I may venture to say, that I was vexed at seeing myself taken notice of by my lover in such a publick manner: because it only increased the jealousies of my master who, tormented me with many harsh reprimands. So great was my dejection, that I used my utmost efforts to conceal my pensiveness, and absence, lest a bad construction should be put upon that behaviour, and it should be interpreted the effects of a passion unsuitable to my tender years.

I must, likewise observe, that in order

der to live in peace with the people, to whom I thought I owed every thing; and without whose assistance, I should not have known how to dispose of myself, I had even got so far, as to determine to apply to the young gentleman my friend, and desire him to desist from his publick interpositions in my favour: lest his generosity should draw upon me the resentment of many others; which would be too sensibly felt by my tender mind. This resolution seemed to me to be so good-natured and kind, that I concluded it would show me more worthy of his admiration than ever: and I was extremely mortified, that I had not some safe, and ready means to put it into execution.

The affair was very difficult: because the head of our company never quitted sight of me, and our people gave

gave to the most indifferent step I took, a sinister interpretation. I thought of it: I weighed it seriously, and carefully. But the more I thought of it, the less probability I saw of bringing it about without danger. Having passed some days in this perplexity, I met with another adventure; which threw me still into a greater embarrassment. My companions observing how high I stood in the good graces of the city of Palermo, proposed that I should collect at one of their general benefits; which might be of advantage to them all, and would be no loss to me. As notice was given to the town of this intention, they assembled at our place of performance on the appointed evening, in an extraordinary concourse. I went from box to box, to reap the fruits of my expectation, and of our common labours, from the generosity of the spectators:

and

and the collection was very considerable. For they all seemed to vie with each other, in giving me marks of their benevolence upon this occasion. When I came to the box of my patron, I found my blood run cold in my veins; and I remained confounded for some time to such a degree, that he spoke some words to me, before I knew what he said. But well I know, that, whilst he put some pieces of gold into the bason, which I held with one hand, he slyly slipped into the other, a pretty large packet : and by that unexpected legerdemain, I was more confounded than before.

Struck with what had happened, though none had observed it, I passed him immediately, and proceeded in my collection. Simple, and astonished as I was, I clearly saw that the affair demanded secrecy : and I was most embarrassed

barrasted how I should keep it from the eyes of the spectators, and from any discovery. I put it into my pocket, as conveniently as I could: it seemed remarkably heavy. Ardently did I long for the time, that I could satisfy my curiosity in private; and see what it was: Even this, was not so easy. I could not expect to be alone, and free from any witness till my hour of going to bed. In good time, this hour, however, came. When I found myself secure from the inquisitive eyes of my companions, I retired into a corner of my chamber, and hastily pulled out the packet to gratify my impatience. I broke open the seal: I untied it: I unfolded it: and, to my surprize, I found it contained a gold repeating watch, of most curious workmanship. As it was the first time I had one in my hands, the reader will easily imagine, that I admired it prodigiously;

and examined it very minutely. I must, nevertheless, here take notice, that I knew it to be a watch; because I had often seen those machines before; but I did not know it to be a repeater; my knowledge reached not so far: and a droll accident happened afterwards, through this ignorance, which cost me some pain.

It may be easily supposed, that this present from my benificent patron, gave me a good deal of pleasure; but that pleasure was presently imbittered by the grand thought how to keep it, without being detected by my companions; or without noise and reproach, in case they found it out. This was the rock against which my felicity struck; and I was in a maze a full half hour, without knowing on what to resolve. What shall I do, said I to myself, with this invaluable present, which

I would by no means part with; and which I cannot yet keep, without creating some narrow spirited suspicion? I know that I have to do, with a malignant set of people, who are always disposed to make any action of another appear culpable: unless it is conducive to their own advantage. Even of the large collection which I made this evening, the smallest part will fall to my share, as I am a novice in the art, and of no consideration, in comparison with experienced and long-celebrated performers of our profession. Should my master even be convinced of the truth of a fact, in which I am not at all to blame: he would, nevertheless, take this watch from me, under a pretence of keeping it for me, and thus I should be robbed of the satisfaction of possessing a memento of a person who deserves my warmest respect and gratitude.

I should have debated this matter yet longer in my fancy : but by chance I threw my eyes on the paper, which had covered the watch : and, finding that it was written on the inside, I thought that was not accidental ; and took up the paper to read it. This was a letter ; though it had not the form of one. The hand writing, however, was extremely legible, and beautiful : and the sentiments were as follows :

“ My dearest Rosara,

‘ I AM not at all surprized you are
 ‘ yet ignorant that I love you :
 ‘ for possibly my love might have been
 ‘ less, had I perceived you quick at
 ‘ making such discoveries ; or had your
 ‘ mind been less adorned with a modesty and simplicity, that cannot fail
 ‘ to charm. I will not tell you how
 powerfully

‘ powerfully this engaging disposition
 ‘ influences my mind : because, perhaps,
 ‘ it might make you blush; and be-
 ‘ cause I had rather give you solid
 ‘ proofs of my affection, such as may
 ‘ leave you no doubt, that my inten-
 ‘ tions are honourable, and worthy of
 ‘ you. Accept this first pledge of
 ‘ my tenderness: and keep it if my
 ‘ friendship be at all dear to you; and
 ‘ if you desire to see how much I will
 ‘ do for your sake. There is nothing
 ‘ in my power I will not do for your
 ‘ credit, and happiness, if you can
 ‘ deign me an equal return of affec-
 ‘ tion. For be assured, you are dearer
 ‘ than life to you.

‘ Count of B——.’]

My feelings on the perusal of this
 letter were inexpressible. I read it three
 or four times over, believing myself

in a dream. I was agitated with such anxious, and eager thoughts, that even now I stand in need of all my calmness and recollection to unfold them; perhaps they may be of use to those, who may think proper to edify by my example.

C H A P.

CHAP. VI.

The Care Rosara takes to conceal Lord B——'s Present : and the curious Accident which discovered it.

THIS was the first time I knew that my patron was the Count of B——, brother to Lady A——, at whose house I had lately dined. This was, likewise, the first time I knew that he loved me : and, as I thought him worthy of my love, I firmly resolved, within myself, to cherish a reciprocal passion for him ; even if that passion should cost me my life. However, there were some circumstances, which tormented me, with a thousand anxieties ; and, as my mind was not accustomed to such agitations, they kept me upon the rack for some days ; and

did not suffer me to sleep a wink all that night. I found great pleasure in being loved by a person of his character : and I congratulated myself not a little, upon my modesty and shyness ; which, by his own declaration, had been very instrumental in procuring me his love. Let me be called a fool : let me be called a poor-spirited creature, by those very wary, and prudent dames, who are indifferent about lovers ; or pretend that they are indifferent only to gratify the enthusiasm of female ambition : virtue, I find, hath its forcible attractives. Pertness, and boldness may please the petulant, and the imprudent : but, to those, whose morals are uncorrupted, and whose manners are under the regulation of decorum, modesty must be far more engaging. How many women, by going eagerly in quest of lovers, make themselves ridiculous to the world :

and yet obtain none? Reserve is laudable in a woman; though she dress her mind in that garb, to infuse languishment into lovers. She, who courts universal adoration, by displaying her charms in a glare to public view, shows herself, altogether unworthy of it: and she, who takes it into her head, that the whole world is dying for her, is most certainly out of her wits.

Fortune, too, is not less capricious in love, than in other human concerns. She flies those who court her; and courts those who fly her. I have known some of my friends, who, in studying to render themselves amiable, have rendered themselves odious. I myself may serve for an example; who made my fortune in love, when I did not think of making any conquest: but my success, indeed, cost me several years of pain.

E 5

Lord.

Lord B——, by declaring himself charmed with my modest behaviour, bestowed a panegyrick upon me, which endeared him to me the more. Finding that I was loved by a gentleman of such honourable principles, I surrendered my heart, without scruple, to my inclination for him: because I thought, if I acted otherwise, it would be unjust, and ungrateful. I knew not as yet, what hopes to found on his infant-flame; though he had engaged in the letter to do every thing in his power for me. The words were few; but they had a very strong, and extensive signification; as they came from a gentleman, who even in his passions, declared himself a partizan of virtue. This reflection, impelled me so strongly to love him, that I wished I could immediately have given him a specimen of my gratitude. It was a gust of passion; which, like fire in a bundle of straw,

straw, spreads, and blazes forth in a moment. Hurried on by this amorous transport, I had almost set pen to paper, and vented the warmth of my heart in an answer: but, unthinking, and blind as I was! I soon perceived that my attempt was impracticable: and that, should I even have preserved in my answer the modesty which I so much piqued myself upon, I could not have found any means of conveying it to the hands of Lord B—, without exposing myself to some dangerous consequence.

Strange it is, thought I, that from an extreme of timidity, I should instantaneously pass to the opposite one of courage, and boldness: that I should think of carrying on an intrigue with a person, whom I knew so little of, though I found it so difficult, and perplexing a matter barely to keep his

E 6 . present,

present : by which there was a chance, that our correspondence might take air, and bring disgrace on me. What murmurs, what envy, what tumults, might I not expect from the people of the house, if they should ever have the least notion that he gave me this token ! In such a case, I must at least expect to lose it. But that went very much against my heart : because the loss of it was not a trifle to my poverty ; and what was of much more weight, with me, because the person who gave it me, conjured me not to part with it, if I had the least regard for him. Since I can do no more for him, said I to my heart :—since I can do no more for him, I will at least bear a part with him in his tenderness, by a faithful execution of his desire. If I cannot send him a line to assure him of my reciprocal affection ; yet who knows, but the time may come, when

I may show him his present, sacredly preserved by me: as a proof of my constant regard for him? Let me then do for him all that I can: since I cannot do for him all that I wish. None shall know that I have this watch, nor by whom it was given me, should I even be forced to keep it about me while I sleep.

Indeed, as I was disposed to keep the matter secret, I could not fall upon any other expedient to effect my purpose. I was not only mistress of very little, but the little I had, was known to all the family: and I was obliged to give a particular account of it to the person who supported me. The least suspicion, would have sufficed to betray me: because they would have strictly examined my trunk, to see whether or no, I had any thing that I had a mind to conceal from them. To
this

this evil, there was no other remedy, but to wear the watch always; and to keep it cautiously from observation. In fine, this was my resolution: and this I did for some days; fancying to myself, that while I had Lord B——'s present with me, I had the pledge of his love.

Will the reader believe, that, notwithstanding all this circumspection, a little time afterwards, I had the keen mortification to hear it murmured by our company, that this gentleman had made me a very rich present. I could not devise how they came acquainted with it: for I had not uttered a syllable about the matter. Nor, could I suspect that the Count himself, would be so imprudent as to lodge a secret with his friends, which, if divulged, might turn out to my disadvantage. But what escapes the knowledge of
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an idle set of people, who make it their business, to pry into their neighbour's actions : and who interpret even the thoughts of others, according to the strain of their passions ? A hint had escaped from a friend of the Count's that he intended to make me a present, before I left the place ; and this inadvertent word, gave rise to many little stories, which gave me a good deal of uneasiness. Subjects of this nature in circulating with the public, receive great addition. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that my companions, instead of reporting Lord B——'s intention to make me a present, gave out that he had actually done it : for which however, they had not the least authority.

I had the first intimation of this malevolent whisper, next day from a friend of mine in our company ; who asked

me in our mutual confidence, what the fine present was, which Lord B—— had sent me in testimony of his patronage. I flatly denied that I had received any thing from him: but my denial, with a perturbation evident enough to convince her that I was not speaking truth.

After such a question, which I thought was put with a view to draw me into a confession, I determined within myself, to hide the unsuspected watch with more care, that very evening: and after having wound it up, as I had seen others do, I wrapped it up closely in a handkerchief, and put it in my pocket.

As I never imagined that so much stress would be laid upon a mere suspicion, I little thought I should soon be brought to a strict examination
upon

upon this article, by my master. I was overwhelmed with confusion, when he took me apart; and, after exaggerating the obligations I owed him, taxed me with the want of confidence in him: which he thought himself entitled to from me at first. I protested that I knew not what he meant: but falling immediately on the subject of the present, he put me into an excessive embarrassment. I perceived, that this information had been loose, and superficial: for he said not a word of the watch: and his accusation was only founded on conjecture. This encouraged me to insist upon the negative: and I warded off any discomposure, that my face might not contradict my tongue. My perseverance in denying the fact, was such, that I thought I had convinced him of my veracity: but I was destined to be the sport of fortune; or to speak more properly, fate led me on to its

own ends, by the very method I took to recede from them, and conduct myself by my own improvident fancy.

As I had a long dialogue with my governor; and we disputed about a gift, which I denied that I had received; though I had it in my pocket; as if I had been afraid, that it would be taken from me, if convicted of a lye, I held it closely in my hand; as it were, to secure it from the impending danger. There are circumstances, in which our animal part acts of its own accord, and without the co-operation of our minds. My mind, and my tongue being totally occupied in eluding my master's interrogatories; and in persuading him to believe me, I was not even sensible that I had a hand in my pocket; that I had that hand upon my watch, wrapped up in my handkerchief, as I above observed; or that I worked it about; and
even

even pressed it violently, through my inattention.

This involuntary motion of my hand, had such an effect, that the repeating spring having received its due compression, my watch unexpectedly struck; and in the moment, that I was making a flat, and vehement denial, told me in its language, that I lied. I was by no means alarmed; because I knew not, that my watch was a repeater. I imagined at first, that the sound came from some other quarter; and, therefore, it gave me no disturbance. But I was sensible of my error; and was confounded, beyond expression: when he roughly resumed his discourse, and said:—"You have at present a repeating watch upon you; which strikes in spite of you: and will you yet presume to tell me, that Lord B——, has not made you a present? Perhaps
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you are afraid, that I would take it from you. And, suppose I should take it from you, I should only pay myself a debt of rigid justice, which you owe me. I have now supported you for five years; and treated you like a daughter: and I do not think you have as yet brought so much advantage to the company, as to repay my cares. Consider, Rosara, that I have great reason to suspect this conduct: and that my affection, ought to be much dearer to you, than a gold repeating-watch, if you knew my intentions toward you: which are wholly planned for your good."

With this he turned his back upon me: and, confused, and ashamed as I was, I did not yet think myself in a very bad plight: since I still retained possession of the watch, after I thought it had been irretrievably lost.

Tears,

Tears, indeed, I own, started into my eyes : but they were tears of shame, rather than of grief. To be detected in a lie, I thought an insupportable disgrace : and yet, I thought I should have been guilty of ingratitude, if I had told the truth. The Count had desired me not to part with his present : and if I was obliged to guard it with a falsehood, I deemed a falsehood in that case venial. I would even have done more for him than this : but in my flutter of spirits, I did not recollect, that my simplicity of mind rendered me dear to him ; that life may be sacrificed to love with praise, and glory : and that virtue should ever tenaciously, and invincibly be retained. Agitated with such opposite reflexions, I was equally disquieted by my master, and my lover. But ardently did I wish for an interview with the latter : for I flattered myself, that he would sooth my discontent.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

Characters of two Persons in the Company.—Event of a Conference between Rosara and Mr. Greenland.

WHEN these first tumults of my mind were calmed, I began to examine my situation; and found it painful, and dangerous. Let the reader take me along with him, and always presuppose, in order to believe what I advance, that I was not, as yet, fully acquainted with myself: for my low education kept my faculties in a state of debasement. Human measures, in general, flow from two opposite principles; either from too much presumption; or, from a dastardly, and inactive timidity, in dubious occurrences.

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He who is too presumptuous, precipitates his heady resolutions, and betrays his imprudence. He who dares not venture, in a proper time, and place, suffers himself to be a dupe to pusillanimous determinations, and shows himself a coward.

The midway is the most secure : and confidence is not less necessary than humility, in our dealings with an obdurate and insolent world. We make some steps in life, from which we cannot honourably recede, but by submission, and coolness : and others, again, where we must push forward, with a bold and commanding ardour. To be able to decide, which of the two courses is preferable, at a critical juncture, the enlarged experience is requisite, which is the school of human prudence : but at that time I had not acquired this prudence ; and, for that reason, I found myself

myself in such embarrassment, and confusion.

On one hand, my situation suggested to me patience; on the other hand, my love spirited me up to enterprize. I dreaded the resentment of our master, and the censure of our company: as if the means of subsistence, and the world itself had been limited to that little circle. If I had reflected, that I earned my bread, as well as the rest, perhaps I might not have been so timorous. If this consideration did not furnish me with necessary courage, I entertained, however, very sanguine hopes, from having Lord B— for my patron and my lover. Is it possible, thought I, that, if he sees me abandoned by every body, for his sake, he will let me perish in the street for want? In his letter, he protests, that there is nothing he would not do for me: but yet, his terms are too general;

ral ; they suffer me not to see, distinctly, where I am to plant the flower of my hopes.

As I had not that knowledge of the world, which my circumstances required, I flattered myself that Lord B— might, and would, marry me : but this hope was like a flash of lightning, which darted forth, and vanished in a moment : because the very humble opinion I had of myself, was more prevalent with me, than my vanity. This hope being shut out, any other views I could entertain from my lover, filled me with horror, merely on glancing them over in thought. Thus I fell back into my former state of despondency, and embarrassment : and I fancied my case desperate ; unless I could regain the good will of my master, even at the expence of sacrificing my tender passion.

This point did not seem to me very difficult to obtain. Mr. Greenland (for that was his name) was one of those men, who have a good heart, but not a correspondent aspect and manner. He was advanced in years: his physiognomy was not only awful, but grim: he was a person of few words; and of a mysterious reserve. A single look from him, disconcerted me: for I had been accustomed, from my childhood, to tremble merely at an abrupt cast of his eye. I cannot deny that he had a partiality for me; as I had many proofs of it: but this partiality was commonly so managed, that it was very dubious and equivocal. Whether this behaviour proceeded from political reflexions, which ought always to be thrown into practice, by those who superintend many people, who think themselves equal to one another; and, therefore, insist upon equal treatment; or whether it was

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was the effects of a secret passion, which might be the case ; certain it was, I frequently felt its influence, though my inexperience could not then comprehend its latent course.

It was supposed, and even given out, in our company, for an undoubted fact, that there was an old private connexion, betwixt Mr. Greenland and Mrs. Foresta, another of our performers ; who had been many years in the business ; and who showed, at times, her ascendance over the mind of her master. Her temper was one of the most haughty, and unrelenting, that ever was ascribed to woman, by romance, or poetry. It exactly suited her figure : for Mrs. Foresta had more of the Amazon, than the dancer, in her gesture, in her mein, in her voice, and in her passions. Equally awful, in her tenderness, and in her wrath, she was never terrified by words ;

nor spoke herself without a threat. Woe to the world, if all her imprecations had been fulfilled; and if all those had been killed, whom she wished to destroy with her own hands. Perhaps, her fury was not very durable in its nature; or she curbed it, and would not suffer it to fall forth, and ruin the world: for her hectoring generally ended in a hearty fit of crying, and in rage against herself. Perhaps Mr. Greenland had some passion for this performer: however, it is certain, she had a warm one for him; or, at least, pretended it. For his friendship was of the same consequence to her, as her subsistence: which she would have found a very difficult matter to procure, if she had been out of his service. Nevertheless, I must own he managed her temper with all that delicacy, which was dictated to him by prudence, if not by love. On many occasions, I clearly perceived, that he
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mortified me, on purpose to make the other less jealous, and chagrined. I was the thorn that rankled in her heart : for wherever we went, I was the topic of conversation ; and this rising luminary in our profession, was, to her, a comet of a malignant aspect.

But Mr. Greenland had not only a partiality, but even a tenderness for me. I too had, already, weathered my storm in life. Some of our company had been so malevolent as to say, that I was of no service to it ; or, at least, that it was ridiculous to be at more expence for me than the other girls of my standing. In spite of these mutineers, my master was not less attentive to me ; and, giving it the name of compassion and charity ; he justified it to those envious disturbers of my peace ; and precluded their future murmurs. It will soon appear, that this kindness did

not flow from clarity: but from a passion, veiled under the mantle of virtue; which occasioned me much torment.

Having premised these necessary descriptions of the people among whom I lived, I shall now, again, endeavour to fix the minds of my readers on the difficulty of my circumstances. Finding that I was detected, with regard to the watch, I was determined, from my perplexed situation, to try all means of making peace with Mr. Greenland; who had shown himself so dissatisfied with my want of sincerity. After having carefully contrived the method I should take, to execute my design, I assumed courage for my enterprize.—I presented myself before him, with the watch in my hand, and thus addressed him.

Here

Here, sir; here is the source of my fault; if a deceit can be called a fault, which was suggested to me by my virtue. I received it from the Count of B——, who slipped it, by surprize, into my hand, at a time when I could not reject it, without giving alarm to the whole body of spectators, and raising a thousand suspicions. Rejected it —— [he here interrupted me] It never came into my head that you should have done that; these are privileges of your calling; and, I may add, of your sex likewise: and I am not unreasonable and absurd enough to propose that you should act differently from other young women of your profession.—Suffer me to finish what I have to say, I replied; and then make any observations on my sentiments you shall think proper. Accident has made me a rope-dancer: I would be a girl of honour, from principle. I do not say that these charac-

ters are incompatible : but I must, at present, separate them, to prove my innocence. I never would have accepted this present, if I could possibly have refused it : for I would avoid giving the least foundation for censure, to the people of this house ; who are, already, licentious in their criticisms upon my conduct, without any cause ; and take the liberty to say, that I gain distinctions and applause, by coquettish arts, and allurements. I was under a necessity of accepting it : and, because it was not received by the approbation of my own deliberate choice, I kept it concealed, even from you. Conscience is my witness, that I am, by no means, answerable for the gallantries paid me, by this nobleman : for I never so much as perceived his partiality for me, till it was, in a manner, obtruded upon my view. I know that I should not have concealed a fact from you, in which,

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according to your own opinion, there was not even the shadow of a crime: but you must attribute my secrecy to my bashfulness, and my fear; by which the real size of objects are magnified; and trifles are made crimes. Past errors cannot be recalled: but they may produce present regret, and future caution. This is the repeating-watch, which my patron gave me: and, I would make you a present of it, were I not afraid that, by such a testimony of my innocence, I should hurt your generosity. If you think this ornament unsuitable to my age and character; or that it may give a loose to cavilling tongues; be so good as keep it for me, till I may wear it without any fear of censure. The many favours you have conferred upon me, are fresh in my memory: and I am sensible that their number is daily augmented: be assured, then, that I am as desirous of your good opinion, as I am

Exit

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bound

bound to be, by these obligations.—
Never imagine that I will deviate from the good principles you have instilled into me. I am not indifferent about fortune : but I will not expose myself to her caprices ; nor will I ever court her smiles, at the expence of my honour.

The close of my speech was accompanied with a modest blush, and the tear trembling in my eye; which melted him to such a degree, that, in his transport of joy, he threw his arms about my neck, and pressed me to his breast. This emotion was not at all unsuitable to his advanced age, and to his character, as a father : for such he had always been to me. I took his behaviour, on this occasion, for an effect of paternal love ; and it gave me great consolation : as I was now persuaded, that our difference was terminated to the satisfaction of each party. I was greatly deceived

ceived in my conjecture : for I was a novice in the great school of the world ; and the human heart was a volume, which I had not yet sufficiently studied.

But I was immediately sensible of my ignorance, when Mr. Greenland began his remonstrances.——That this watch was altogether useless to me.—That the sight of it gave too much offence to the people of the house.—That I stood in need of things of less value ; but more adapted to my profession and my sex—That in cloathes, linen, and other female accoutrements, he would give me its equivalent, if I would let him dispose of it as he thought proper.

This was a grating sound in my ears : for my heart was prejudiced in favour of Lord B——; and it commanded me to keep this precious memorial of his love. I was, therefore, much at a loss.

for an answer. I durst not refuse: and I was unwilling to assent; lest I should betray myself into imprudence, and ingratitude. I steered between the two extremes; as fairly as my agitation permitted me. —I told him, that I begged leave to think a little of his proposal:—that I would consider at my leisure, what things I wanted.—That, in the mean time, he might keep the watch: and we would talk the subject over, at another opportunity.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A domestic Quarrel discovers Mr. Greenland's Passion for Rosarâ.—He offers her Marriage.

THE whole story was immediately known to the house: and from thence it was divulged over the town. For our family was composed of people, who had no entertainment in any thing, but in mangling the reputation of others. It was not at all surprising, that this affair came to the ears of my Patron: as there were busy people, ready to inform him of it, on purpose to set us at variance. I had no more communication with him, and his acquaintance, except what the place of our performance admitted of. But there they gave me
many

many assurances of their favour, by their expressive looks. I saw my lover again, and conversed with him, at his sister's; where, with some other of my companions, I dined, for the second time: but I had not courage enough to address him on the subject, and open my heart to him, when opportunity offered.

I perceived he knew that his present was lodged in other hands; or, rather, I suspected it: for, one evening, when I performed, by the signs he made me with his hands and eyes, I perceived he was very much displeased with me.— This was a wound to my heart, which gave me incredible pain: perhaps the smart would have abated, with a little time, had not an intimate friend called upon me, that very evening, and told me, in confidence, that my watch had been seen, by Lord B——, in the hands
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of Mrs. Foresta, who gave out, that it was a present, which Mr. Greenland had made her, after buying it of me.

This news exasperated me so highly, that it robbed me, for a while, of my reason; made me fling off the mask, and avow my passion for my patron, in a manner, perhaps, not altogether consistent with decorum. I flew to Mrs. Foresta's room, where I seldom entered, upon account of her jealous extravagances; and I soon perceived, that the truth had been told me: for I saw my watch, hung by a glass, at which she then happened to stand, adjusting her head-dress. I snatched it in a moment, and turned about to run off: it was a fatal moment; and its consequences made us the subject of conversation, over all Palermo. Mrs. Foresta, not at all disconcerted at my freedom, opposed my flight, with her voice, and hands.

hands. She discharged such a volley of abuse upon me, as might have been expected from a termagant of her character; who knew not the bounds of civility, and decency.—She caught hold of me, by a silk apron I had on; and threatned to beat me soundly: unless I gave her back her own. But if her clamour was louder than mine, I surpassed her in agility of person: and, leaving the apron in her hands, which tore in the fray, I ran to my own chamber, where I locked myself in.

Her passion alarmed the whole house: and Mr. Greenland ran to the noise; who, if he had complied with her hectoring resentment, must have instantaneously put me to death. She insisted upon satisfaction, and revenge, for an affront, committed by a paltry girl, against a person of character. That repeating

peating watch had been given her : and let Mr. Greenland see to the restitution of it : otherwise, herself and her daughter, should immediately quit the company ; who were its principal credit, and support. — On the other hand, Mr. Greenland, all coolness and policy, endeavoured to pacify her :—protesting, that her desire should be complied with :—that there was a mistake in the affair, which he would undertake to rectify :—that Rosara, when informed of the truth of the matter, would submit to reason, and equity :—that he would not have such tumults in his house :—that his company had been always animated, and upheld by the spirit of union :—and—that he would not suffer these intestine disorders. — In short, — that Mrs. Foresta might be quiet : for he would find means to terminate the quarrel.

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Any other person, would have submitted to these arguments : but, in this case, Mrs. Foresta was untractable, upon many accounts. She knew what power she had over the mind of our master, from old friendship. It galled her to think she should be out-rivalled by a girl; who gave such promising hopes in her profession. It gnawed her soul, to see me enjoy the smiles of the public : and she was afraid, if I came off victorious in this dispute, her importance would be still more diminished. Arrogance dictated her sentiments; and therefore she thought herself the only person in the company that ought to wear a repeating watch. She had shown this insidious opposition oftentimes before, in things of the most trifling consequence. Stimulated by all these provocations, she would not listen to reason; or, rather, she was incapable of attending to it. Mr. Greenland, himself,

self, was glad to fly from her fury : she was for destroying him by the blast of her breath. Ridiculous was this violence, in the mouth of a woman : but it has furnished me with circumstances, wherewith to mark her character.

On the noise of this riot, the family, which consisted of eight persons, divided itself into two factions : but the majority declared themselves in my favour, and assembled in my room to applaud my conduct. I was too overjoyed, at having recovered my watch, that I was indifferent about consequences ; and was not to be terrified, even by a conspiracy of the whole world against me. On being called upon, by Mr. Greenland, to speak with him, in private, on this affair, I went with more courage than usual : for, the more a man is accustomed to tempests, he is the less afraid of them. He was for putting on

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an air of indifference with me : but I knew, by the talk of the family, and my own observation, that he was not so little affected. He insisted that he had only lent the watch to Mrs. Foresta : but that she had foolishly taken it into her head, to report, that he had made her a present of it : to which assertion she had now stuck, to avoid a contradiction of herself. He declared, that he would sacrifice even the value of the watch, to calm these disturbances, that might bring on us the censure of a city, where we were in such vast esteem : and which might end in the total dissolution of his company ; an accident that would be very much to his disadvantage. In short, by gentle transitions in his discourse, he, at last, offered me thirty chequins, if I would leave the watch to his disposal : adding, that he would fix an annual income upon me, if I chose to continue with him : whereas I had
served

served him thus far, barely for my maintenance, and other little expences, that were necessary in my profession.

All these proffers demonstrated that the watch had been given to Mrs. Foresta : and Mr. Greenland was only attempting to purchase her triumph over my defeat. I was a woman, as well as she : I was young : I was in love : I was not without hopes of finding protection. And, for all these reasons, it was not so easy a matter to prevail on me. I should have used Lord B—— unworthily, if I had sacrificed his present to any one's caprice, after he had so earnestly desired me to keep it with care. Mrs. Foresta was envious of my rising fortune : therefore it would have been absurd in me, to give her arms, wherewith she might always have annoyed me. Should my master prove humane to me, he might expect, that I
would

would be of advantage to him, in return, even beyond his deserts. These were the reflexions which encouraged me to act in a manner I should never have acted without them.

To the offers of Mr. Greenland, I replied ; as any woman in my situation would have done. I told him, that the watch was at his service, without paying me a farthing for it, whenever he chose to appropriate it to himself ; but I would suffer no other use to be made of it ; nor so shamefully injure Lord B——, for all the money in the world. I added, that Mrs. Foresta had no right to think of glorying in my spoils ; that she already too grossly abused my weakness, and subjection. I protested, that if she threatned to leave the company, unless I gave her up the watch, in question, I would continue no longer in her society ; though I should banish myself
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to a retreat for ever. I enforced these remonstrances with all the little eloquence, and blandishments, in which my sex are such adepts: and I found my director in such a state of perplexity, that he stood, and looked at me, a long time, without being able to articulate a word.

Who would ever have dreamt, that this mysterious silence of his, was to end in a discourse, that confounded me beyond expression? You have spoken, said he, justly enough: but you have spoken in a manner so different from your usual strain, that you confound me to such a degree, am hardly sensible whether I am talking with you, or not. I have now a certainty of what I only before entertained a suspicion of: a suspicion, indeed, strengthened by the affirmations of the whole house; that you are deeply enamoured
of

of Lord B—— : and that you are ready to sacrifice your fortune to his transitory passion. People of his rank want not arguments to seduce women of your age, and station. Provided they gratify their amorous desires, the cruel repentance and misery they bring upon poor deluded girls, are objects, which they never once regard. All is not gold that glitters : and, though they make large, and warm promises, in cases of this nature, they generally dispense with the performance of them.

What can you expect from a patron, that you may not have by your profession, without hazard, and shame ? Tho' you should be treated like a princess, you will always be the kept woman of a young gentleman ; who may grow weary of you, as easily as he fell in love with you. I do not suppose you give yourself leave to imagine he will marry
you,

you.--My dear girl, if you expect to make your fortune by marriage, you must make it in my house; into which I took, you, when you were but ten years of age: and where I have always carefully guarded you, with an honest intention to make you my wife.

At these words I started, and fell two or three paces back: as if I had been struck with a thunder-bolt. Nay, do not start, he replied: for I do not think I have said any thing so unbecoming, that it needs to shock you. If I never, till now, made you the least discovery of my design, I have been silent upon the subject, that you might not hereafter have reason to complain, that I constrained your affections, by my authority. I was in hopes, that the paternal care I have taken of you, from your tender years, would rouse, in the first

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place,

place, gratitude in your bosom; and afterwards, that love would follow by degrees, and prompt you to acquiesce in my desires. But, if I am not mistaken, a foreign passion, fomented by your vanity, and your imprudence, has usurped the place, which was due to me in your heart. Perhaps, this notice of my upright intentions may make you correct your youthful errors; At any rate, we shall not continue at Palermo: and, therefore, pray be generous enough to sacrifice Lord B—— to my love; as I shall be willing to sacrifice Mrs. Foresta, with all her dependencies, to your more just pretensions. I have said enough, for a man of my cast; for I never spoke so much in my life, on a topic of this kind.

Think of what I have said, my dearest Rosara; and consider, that though
you

you should even, at my intreaty, give up this watch to Mrs. Foresta ; yet I will put arms in your hands, that will amply avenge you, and stab her to the heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Mr. Greenland's Artifice eluded.—

Rosara finds Means to speak with Lord B.—

I Cannot say what particular effect the speech I have just related, had upon me: the impressions it made were so many, and so different. I shuddered at the very thought of marrying Mr. Greenland:—a man advanced in years—ill shaped—his features disagreeable—of a disposition the reverse of mine:—in short, he had just those qualities, which naturally excited my aversion. But, setting all this aside, I had such an abhorrence of my profession, that alone was sufficient to make me hate a marriage, which would oblige me to

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continue in it as long as I lived. I have before observed, that my sentiments were superior to my miserable extraction. If I was obliged to earn my bread in an abject sphere, I had, in my soul, a fund of pride; which made me blush for the servile necessity, to which I had been subjected, by fortune. But I lived in continual hopes that she would, some time or other, open me the way to a better condition: and, if I had foolishly precluded it, by a marriage, which was so contrary to my inclinations, I should have thought myself unworthy of earthly happiness.

Mr. Greenland's measures were not the result of profound judgment: and I would rather have done a rash action, than have complied with his proposals; notwithstanding my submission. It was not improbable that I might do something precipitate: for my simplicity,

and modesty, flowed from my inexperience, and tender years ; but the elevation of my sentiments, was the strong, inherent work of nature. This offer, therefore, though it made me reflect a little, did not disconcert me. I concluded, that he would not use any compulsion against me : and, should even violence be intended, I had armed, and prepared myself for the blow. In these circumstances, my chief perplexity arose from my not fully understanding Mr. Greenland's designs ; which seemed, to me, to destroy each other reciprocally, and to be altogether inconsistent. How could he, at the same time, wish to make me his wife, and protect my rival, Mrs. Foresta ; to whom he was for making a present of my repeating-watch, which I had parted with so much against my inclination ? I will admit, said I, within myself, that I am a young practitioner in the school of love : I will admit

admit, that the volatile passion has more of comedy, and extravagance, in it, in our profession, than in all the world besides: but what species of love is this, which offends me, while it would court me; and pleads with me to repose a confidence in its protestations, whilst it gives me such a glaring proof of its infidelity? On this ocean, the compass was of no service: and, as I saw not the gleam of any star, I was obliged to sail in the dark; in danger, every moment, of splitting upon some hidden rock.

My most probable suspicion was, that Mr. Greenland had contrived these offers, to sooth me, in the present affair, and allure my vanity, by giving me hopes of a fortune, that would make me far superior to my rival.

Perhaps I was deceived in my con-
jecture

jecture : but it was supported by many strong appearances ; which made me enjoy the deceit. Indeed, after a long train of thinking, I gave myself up entirely to this opinion : and I reaped, at least, one great advantage from it. I was not so much terrified, as at first, by the idea of the threatned match, which I now construed into a mere political project.

I formed my plan according to these suspicions : and I began to play the woman of spirit, with a resolution, with which I have always been satisfied.—Thanks be to Heaven, I was endowed with presence of mind, courage and intrepidity, fit for the most arduous enterprizes. If my girlish modesty kept these qualities, for a long time, depressed, they began to blow, however, at this period ; and were such faithful companions to me, in all the future actions.

actions of my life, that, without them, I never should have been, to my great good fortune, what I am at present.

The resolution that I took, was, to parry off art, with art; and to direct my scheme in such a manner, that, thro' the means of Mr. Greenland himself, I might be freed from my apprehensions of him. I, therefore, presented myself before him, as soon as I found a proper opportunity, in an air of resignation, and humility, which were very familiar to me: and, I dare say, I surprized him, when I made him the following speech: for I hardly think he ever expected such an address.—Sir, you have told me things, that so far exceed the common stretch of my belief, that I shall imagine I may have dreamt them; unless I hear them, from your own mouth, once more. The honour of having you for a husband, is a fortune

far superior to my slender merit ; and corresponds only with that kind partiality which you have shown me, from my childhood. I should be blind and ungrateful if I refused your offer : but I should, likewise, be guilty of a stupid presumption, if I should think of entitling myself to that signal favour, by the trifling sacrifice of the watch, which you wish to have at your disposal. Why did I not make you a present of it at first ? You would not then have thought my gift proceeded from a selfish view ; and that I was wanting, by a bribe, to purchase the honour of being your wife. However, I beg your acceptance of it : and, I assure you, I beg it without any interested view. If I do not lessen myself, by this action, in your esteem, pray let me not suffer in the favourable opinion of others : because that forfeiture should render me less worthy of your bounty. As I am going to transfer the
present

present of a respectable gentleman, whom I would not willingly offend, suffer me, in the first place, to ask his permission ; and pray procure for me, yourself, an interview with him. I have no doubt of carrying our point : for I know what strain to give my petition, that it may be honoured with his assent. Assure yourself, I shall fulfil my proposal to the utmost of my power : but think not, by this declaration, that I would bind you to yours. I want only to convince you that my heart is good ; and that, if I am rash and haughty, in the first ardour of resentment, I am, afterwards, as ready to make submission for my fault.

Here I ended. — But while I was speaking, I saw, in Mr. Greenland's face, the agitations of his mind : and I afterwards reflected, in private, upon my observations. I have already said, that

I thought he did not expect such a proposal: and my conjecture was right.— His long silence, and hesitation, sufficiently convinced me of it. In short, I had brought him betwixt *Scylla* and *Charybdis*: he was under a necessity either of drinking or choaking. I asked his leave to perform an act of decorum, from which, all his authority could not exempt me, with any shadow of reason. The grant I had made him, was an attestation of my obedience; from which I could not go back, without the imputation of levity and falshood. There was no medium left him, if he had a mind to be consistent with himself; and to support the same character, throughout his transaction. He saw, very well, to what a difficult pass I had brought him: and he avoided it as well as he could, by answering me, in general terms.— That he owned my request was fair enough; though, he thought, not very
very

very free from affectation:—that he would, however, do his best to oblige me.—He knew not, he said, what way he should fall upon to comply with my desire: as he was very rigid, in keeping his women from any connexion with people out of the house; lest they should be exposed to those malicious calumnies, which were thrown on other companies; wherever he went, in quest of his livelihood.

From these confused expressions, I discovered his embarrassment: but the more I thought of it, the more I found him under a necessity of extricating himself out of it, in my own way. Satisfied then, that I should have an opportunity of talking with Lord B——, without having our interview looked upon as a crime, by my master, I now considered, how I should avail myself, to the utmost, of those precious moments,

ments, to read the Count's soul, and to convince him of my gratitude. I was very desirous to have his protestation explained; which assured me, that there was nothing he would not do for me: but I was deterred from putting that question, by the pain and confusion it would have cost me. Perhaps it was pardonable in my love, and my vanity, to entertain some hopes, that he would marry me: but a discovery of my hopes, on this occasion, however it might have made for my satisfaction, would certainly be a violation of my timid, and, hitherto, uncorrupted modesty.

At length, however, I found out a middle course: and I now thought only of executing it, as well as I could. I had so strong a desire to clear up this affair with Lord B——, that I was apprehensive lest Mr. Greenland should recall

recall his leave, and destroy all my hopes. Nevertheless, he did not change his mind; but told me, some days after, that we were again invited to dine with the Countess of A — ; that he could not attend me there, as he had done at other times; and that, therefore, I might go with Miss Lucinda, or any other of my companions, in whom I could repose most confidence. This was an evident sign, that he chose to leave me at full liberty to discourse with Lord B — , by freeing me from the constraint of his gloomy presence.

Lucinda was niece to Mr. Greenland, of about my age, but of a different complexion. She was prodigiously expert in dancing on the rope; and her passion for it, was equal to her dexterity. You might as well have condemned her to death, as have made her change her occupation. She was
my

my very intimate friend, in whom I had a full trust: for we had grown up together; and had always communicated our thoughts to each other. However, I had not imparted to her, the secret of my passion for Lord B——; though, if I had informed her of it, I am sure I should have had no cause to repent of my confidence: for she had been faithful to me on many other occasions, even at the expence of disobliging her uncle. In my present circumstances, I could not wish for a better opportunity of talking freely with my patron; and opening my mind to him. I thought, the fortunate moment; which I had been so long, and eagerly wishing for, would never arrive. But I did not doubt, in the least, when it should come, that my suspense and anxiety would be removed.

Congratulating

Congratulating myself that an accident, which had cost me so much pain, had, likewise, procured me this pleasure, I then for the first time made a reflection; which I have always since found confirmed by experience, and which justifies the title, I have prefixed to these memoirs. A survey of the unexpected lucky hits, which happened to others, and myself, made the subject of my reflections. I had afterwards many corroborating proofs of the influence of good fortune. It has been made a deity, by the weakness of human imagination. There is not any predominant constellation at our birth, which renders us either happy or miserable. Human affairs, are an effect of the first, and universal laws of providence; which generally leaves the course of our life to the combinations of chance. And these combinations are, perhaps, remarkably favourable to
one

one man out of a hundred. From these favourable circumstances flows that series of accidents, which we call strokes of good fortune; because they come upon us, when we least expect them; nay; even sometimes, when all circumstances seem to exclude them. I am one of those, who can boast, that I have all my life seen the sun break forth from clouds; and have been enabled, notwithstanding the greatest impediments, to advance one step forward in the path of life, towards the goal of earthly felicity; which I at length attained. The first proof of my observation, the reader has already seen in the occurrences above mentioned; and he will meet with so many examples of this nature, in the course of these memoirs, that there will be no occasion to point them out particularly.

C H A P.

CHAP. X.

Rosara has a Proposal made her at Lady A——'s.—Converses with the Count, with a view to discover if he loves her.

LADY A——'s coach came for me early, as if it were auspicious to my desires; and I went to her house, accompanied by Lucinda; where I was received with all possible demonstrations of love. Soon, likewise after me, came the Count, my patron, and he was the sole topick of conversation, before his arrival. His sister, seemed more interested, than any other person, in giving me a favourable opinion of him. I found that she was acquainted with the story of the watch; and with the domestick disorders it had occasioned, without any fault of mine. What-ever

ever good opinion, she had of our master, she highly disapproved his conduct in this affair; and expressed great satisfaction, that he had not then come along with me: as, she should, consequently, enjoy my company with more ease, and freedom. These beginnings were so prosperous, that I thought the whole world my own: and, I concluded, that my meeting with the Count, her brother, would still afford me higher successes.

Afterwards, the conversation changed to another subject; which had not the least connexion with him: but it makes the principal foundation of these memoirs. The Countess mentioned another company of rope dancers, who had been, the year before, at Palermo; but were now at Naples: and made a considerable noise there: because they not only entertained the publick

lick with rope dancing, but they likewise, acted dramatical pieces, in a very masterly manner, and to very crowded houses. The success of people of my own profession, was no news to me: but the lady did not mean simply, to inform me of a fact; for she went on to ask me, if I had ever repeated any passage of a play, by rote: as, in her opinion, I had rather been intended by nature, for the drama, than for dancing on the rope. I answered, that I had sometimes repeated speeches, but more for pleasure, than as a study preparative to the art; that our master had intended to unite the two professions; but that he had not carried his design into execution: because he was afraid that he might have multiplied his cares, and expences, without a sufficient probability of augmenting, likewise, his gain. The stage, at present, I added, is in a very degenerate, and contemptible state.

Many

Many low people have taken it into their heads, that their impudence qualified them to speak in publick; and to get a certain and decent subsistence by the theatre. Wretches, who are so far from being able to express the passions of the human mind, in a forcible manner; that they do not even understand the meaning of those verses, which they mechanically repeat. Hence this ancient, and respectable profession, is fallen into such disrepute, that gentlemen, and people of merit, think it below them to embrace it. As for myself, I believe, my dramatic art would be but very moderate, like my skill in rope-dancing: but, if inclination, and taste, were only in question, I would much rather labour with my voice, than with my legs. I should always prefer the application of my mental faculties, to the hazardous toil of my body: and it would, at least, afford
me

me more pleasure, though it might not procure me more reputation, in the world.

This I spoke from my heart: and all our family had often heard me talk in the same strain. The Countess declared herself, entirely of my opinion; and, continuing the subject, begged I would be so obliging as to repeat any passage, in a play I remembered, that she might be confirmed in her opinion of me. I complied with her request immediately; though not without some tremor: and, just as I was repeating a scene out of *Sophonisba*, Lord B—— unexpectedly arrived; and caught me in the height of my declamation.

All the powers of my mind being absorbed in what I was about, I did not perceive that he had come in, till I heard him applauding me, just as I concluded

concluded a period, with all that force and enthusiasm, which the imagery inspired. At this noise I turned about—I saw him—blushed—was struck dumb: and, covering my face with my hands, I ran into a corner of the room, to hide myself; as if I had been guilty of a fault. All the bystanders laughed at this humourous accident. The recital being ended, the Count, and the rest of the gentlemen, began to commend me; who all vowed, they would have me made a player; though they should turn actors themselves, and seek their fortunes in my company.

I took these words for a jest; as they really were: but jests frequently give rise to the most serious transitions of life. According to the opinion of my lover, and his friends, who were, undoubtedly, too much prejudiced in my favour, I had a voice exactly modelled to the stage;

stage ; an action, which animated every little circumstance ; a gracefulness, and flexibility of carriage, for diversity of characters ; and an energy of expression, which interested and transported the hearers ; as if the very person had been speaking, whom I represented. This was, indeed, saying too much, from the little specimen of my ability, which I had given them. But compliments, of the same kind, in process of time, were so often repeated to me, by those, before whom I acted, that these first encomiums were payed me with some foundation.

To wave this discourse, which only oppressed my modesty, I began some other subject ; but in vain : for Lord B—— resumed the conversation ; and said,—I beg the matter may not end in idle compliments, and ceremonies : for seriously, I cannot bear, that you should

waste your life, in skipping upon a rope; at the hazard, of breaking your neck.———I would much rather see you, charming your hearers, upon the stage; and making your own fortune, as well as that of some sensible manager; who would set a proper value upon your talents: and usher them, to the best advantage, into public esteem. Tell me only, whether, or no, you chuse to second your genius. For I am ready to procure you such a reception, as you deserve, in a company, with whom my recommendation, I know, would be of weight. If you think of turning your views to the stage, the head of the company at Naples, will, I am sure, be very glad to have you. His players have acquired great honour, and I should be proud to make that metropolis, acquainted with your merit. I know what I am saying; and, as I wish you all prosperity, from my heart, it rests

rests only with you to facilitate the means of doing you service, in such a manner, as shall be most suitable to your talents, to your desert, and to my earnest desire.

Any other young woman in my station would have been puffed up with this discourse; but to me it was a gloomy cloud, which intercepted my sight: it was a thunderbolt to my soul which totally deprived me of sensation. Such a proposal, from the mouth of Lord B——, seemed, to me, to destroy the large professions he had made me, in his letter. If I had a mind to turn player instead of rope-dancer, the change was not difficult; and, I did not see why, I might not effect it without his mediation. But, if I fell back to these humble views, I thought it was better to be the wife of Mr. Greenland, who, was the head amongst his people, than

a hireling, and a servant upon the stage. I know not, whether or no, the personal merits of the Count, had at that time, taken much hold of my heart. I know, that the gaudy prospect of raising my condition had a powerful effect upon me; and stimulated me, perhaps, more warmly than love. If his regard for me would go no farther than to patronize me in any ordinary profession, I thought the prospect was but bleak, and unworthy of my attention. My vanity expanded beyond my sphere. I was not for giving myself any trouble; unless it should be with a view, to produce me some extraordinary fortune. At the first shock of this disappointment, I thought the very ground failed under my feet: and I was only sensible of my existence, by the mortifying idea of my vain, and chimerical grandeur.

I was now almost determined not to talk to the Count, my patron, in the manner I had proposed, and planned: but, as my fears might possibly be groundless, I thought it was better to come to a full knowledge of my yet uncertain destiny. To his offers, I rejoined only in general terms of gratitude, and respect: and I waited for the favourable moment when I should be at liberty, to speak to him in a different language. I had the mortification to find it long protracted, by many trifling occurrences. After a tedious interval, however, we rose from table: and the company went to cards. As I knew nothing of any game, I was necessarily left out: and when I happened to be at some distance from the rest, Lord B—— came up to me, and made me sit down with him, at a card table that stood apart: under the pretence of teaching

me a certain game, the very name of which, I instantaneously forgot; my mind was so absorbed in other objects. My dearest Rosara, said he to me, (and he pressed my hand while he spoke) my dearest Rosara, I am desirous of doing you a material service; and I have not yet the pleasure to know, whether you are satisfied with it.—Softly, good Sir, interrupting him here, somewhat sharply; I never heard, that it was customary for people of different sex, and station, to begin their conversation, by talking with the hands. This treatment I know, arises, because I unfortunately was not at liberty to send you an answer to the letter, in which you were so obliging, as to inclose your present of the watch. If you had received my letter in return; and by it been made acquainted with my sentiments, I am apt to imagine you would now address me in a different manner. I
was

was not at a loss, how to return you my thanks in the common form of politeness; but, I have hitherto delayed any discharge of my debt, because, as I was ignorant of what you meant by your offers, I knew not exactly, in what strain to express my gratitude. My modesty, which you are pleased to exaggerate in that very obliging letter, cannot be ascribed to me as any merit: because it is only a rigid duty of my age, my sex, and my humble education. That a gentleman of your rank, should fall in love, with a girl in my station, is not an uncommon case: but, the fate of many, has not been so favourable, as to justify the weakness of one. I will admit, that you are ready to do any thing, for my sake: but, that, any thing, with regard to me, is merely an ideal good: for, I am sensible I deserve nothing; and, therefore, hope for nothing from you. I am determined,

not to admit the impressions of love; unless, I can have the offer of a match, which, by an equality of condition, promises me reciprocal, and equal happiness. Without this inducement, I will not sell my liberty, for all the wealth of the world: and, even this inducement, has not force enough, to decoy me so far, as to make me hastily take a resolution, on which, the satisfaction of my life depends. I am more desirous of quiet, than marriage: and were I even disposed to marry, I can have Mr. Greenland, when I think proper: he waits only for my consent: I do not know what I shall determine, with regard to this view; because, I must regulate my conduct, as I shall find myself circumstanced. But I am very certain, and I tell it you, Sir, to give you an attestation of my esteem for you, that nothing in the world shall induce me to marry him, except your advice.

This

This is the most obsequious sentiment of gratitude that my heart can cherish, in return for your goodness; which I have but too much experienced; and, I am ashamed, I cannot make you a more suitable return. Thus, I desire you to be the arbiter of my will: and by giving you the direction of it, I resign myself up, as it were, to your disposal. In accepting this trust, you need not say, that you are ready to do any thing for me: because here your compassion alone, is requisite; which, assuredly I need not despair of obtaining; since, I have already received so many testimonies, of it from you.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

The mysterious Answer which Lord B— gives to Rosara.——The Measures they take to prevent an intercourse with each other.

LORD B—— heard me, to the end, with a most earnest attention: but, as he kept a steady calmness of countenance, I could not read the operations of his mind. I hung, as it were, upon his lips, in expectation of an answer, that should decide my fate: but he made me wait for it a considerable time, looking me stedfastly in the face, without uttering a syllable. At last he broke silence: but in an act of astonishment, and anger; which filled me with apprehension:——— Well! exclaimed he, striking

striking the table, at which we sat, and shuffling a pack of cards;—well; such is the perverseness of this world: we cannot do all that we would: nor can we always speak the sentiments with which we are inspired. I should here be silent, lest I do you an injury: and yet, I must speak, lest I do myself one. Mr. Greenland your husband!—If I saw this event, I would give my suffrage to the common opinion; that women of your profession are born to be unfortunate. I have spoken amiss, my dear madam, I have spoken amiss: or, however, I should not have gone such a length with you. This match may make you happy: or, at least, it may not make you unfortunate; as, perhaps, my affection might. A present mediocrity may be preferable to a future uncertain grandeur. Nothing is wanting, but your assent, to make you

considerable in your profession: but it is, at present, impracticable to make you a lady. There is nothing, certainly, that I would not do for you; because I love you: but you will not like to suffer any delay; because, perhaps, you like yourself better than any other person. The opinions of the world have not empire enough over me, to make me a tyrant over myself: but I lend a delicate, and a patient ear to the dictates of nature. I could marry you to-morrow, without the least violence to my own heart; without any difficulty: but, by so doing, I should give exquisite pain to my mother. I know very well to what lengths her affection carries her, in my favour: and I love her too well to accelerate her death, by disobliging her. Time alone can combine the duties of a son, and of a lover. For that time, which cannot be at a very great distance, I can wait with patience,

tience, through my filial affection : but you may think this procrastination, of prejudice to your honour. I must leave you to act as you think proper.— I cannot bear to think, that my influence may, possibly, injure your peace, or fortune : and my conscience will always acquit me, for having made you as good an offer, as was in my power : though, to your prudence, and tender apprehensions, it may seem of no consequence. Let us be friends, if we are not to be lovers : and if I lose a wife, who would be dearer to me than my being, I shall have, at least, the consolation to reflect, that we missed not each other by my fault. This, madam, is the explanation of my promises : and, perhaps, it may occasion your refusal of them. Depend upon it, I will marry you, if you will wait till I can do it, without offending my mother. It is almost morally impossible, that I shall
ever

ever gain her consent, if we consider her character, and maxims: but, we may conclude, without any improbability, that she will, one time or other, die.—May Heaven long preserve her! But her age, and her constitution, forebode, that she will not be very long amongst us. As soon as I shall be free, nothing shall prevent me from making you mine; except a contrary determination of your will. If this hope appears to you distant, and uncertain, I would have you follow your own inclinations; that you may never have occasion to charge me with your unhappiness. The alternative is not so easy; and, therefore, I cannot so easily expect from you an unchangeable decision. Think the matter over, at your leisure: for I promise you, upon the honour of a gentleman, I will not alter my resolution, till I am acquainted with yours. My best wishes attend you, till our next meeting:

ing: for I need not further explain myself to day.

Having spoken thus, he was getting up, to go away: but I detained him: for there still remained a perplexity in my mind, which I could not bear. I had got more satisfaction than I expected from him; considering the beginning of our interview. As people in love are credulous, his words had, with me, an oracular authority. I was pleased, to find I was not deceived in my hopes.—I was pleased, to find, that I had come to the knowledge of what I had to expect; without incurring the imputation of forwardness:—and, I was pleased, to find in him those ingenuous sentiments, which I endeavoured to cherish in myself; and which, I wished he might principally esteem in me. Since he had firmly promised that he would marry me, he well deserved that I should
wait

wait for him. For patience was necessary, in his situation. But what was to become of me, till the happy moment arrived, when I was to be his wife? They, who do not take every circumstance into consideration, seldom reach the object of their desires. The world abounds with heads, that are fraught with magnificent ideas: but they are so negligent, and stupid, in bringing the means to an end, that all their gaudy, luxuriant thoughts die, fruitlessly, away. Since we cannot, at a bound, pass from one extreme to another, we should, first of all, consider, what way we are to take. This was the first, and immediate reflexion, which presented itself to me, on that occasion. I may safely wait, thought I: but what shall I do in the mean time? Shall I prosecute my business? But who will secure me from Mr. Greenland's importunity; if ever he should, in earnest, be disposed to

to take me, for his wife? Shall I determine to leave him? But how shall I subsist, at the expence of another, without giving umbrage to the world? Shall I go and get my bread in another company of rope-dancers, or players? But how could I do that, unless I had a mother at my side, to screen me from slander? In whatever light I viewed this point, I saw difficulties: nor durst I venture upon a resolution, without advice.

This uncertainty made me detain Lord B——: and, having laid my doubts before him, I begged his assistance. You lose yourself, answered he, in trifles: for nothing should be difficult to a person, who is really in love. If you desire to be independent of Mr. Greenland, that you may not be exposed to his courtship, you may leave him; and remain, nevertheless, in Palermo:

lermo: and I will take as much care of your support, as of my own. If you be afraid, that, by living in this manner, you will lower yourself, in the esteem of the public, I think there is some reason for it: as the good opinion of the world ought to regulate our conduct. In this case I should be exposed to censure, as well as you: and my mother's suspicions might be excited; which would render the remedy worse than the disease. But is there no other course for us to take, by which necessity, and prudence, may be combined? There certainly is, my dearest Rosara: and I can propose one of them: and you may have the liberty of choosing. If you chuse to enter into the company of actors, at Naples, I will take care that you shall be well received there; and respected as one whom I patronize. If you would bid adieu, for ever, to such a way of life; and in
that

that manner give me an opportunity of serving you, I will engage that my sister shall take you into her family, in the quality of her woman : but, depend upon it, she shall treat you as her daughter. I will not tell you to which of the two ways I am most inclined : for, in this matter, I would, by no means, have you sacrifice your opinion to mine. Resolve as you think fit : for I shall concur, with the utmost pleasure, in your determination.

No terms could be more honourable than these ; or more expressive of his desiring to make me happy. I could then no longer doubt of the scope of his intentions : and I was as much overjoyed, as a girl in love could be, with the flattering idea, that I should one day be his wife. I found I could contentedly wait, till the death of his mother. I saw my fortune made : I saw my
hap-

pinefs established in that hope: and I would suffer any thing, that I might not be wanting to myself: but I was very much embarrassed in my choice of the two stations proposed to me.

As my spirit was naturally high, I shuddered at the very name of a servant. I had tasted the sweets of public admiration: and to pass from the liberty of the theatre to the limits of four walls, I thought a very abrupt, and glomy transition. 'Tis true, I should be continually under the eye of the man I loved: but I should likewise be exposed to the censure of his relations; who never would approve of our correspondence. My sentiments were always superior to my condition: and I could not forget myself, for the sake of another. I fancied, that, by this humiliation, I should become contemptible to the Count; as before I had
been

been his idol, by my modest reserve, and maiden dignity. No, thought I to myself, I will not be a servant; even though service should be the path to a throne. The bread that I can earn, by my own industry, and talents, will be sweeter than that which I shall eat as a domestic, in a family. The wills of men are subject to the general mutability of human nature. If I should be led to this measure, by the hopes of marrying the Count, and he should cease to love me, I lose, at the same time, the fruits of his patronage, and of my youth; and should be stigmatized with the meanness, of having served for bread. No! I will not be a servant; and, since it is my duty to attempt all honest means of bettering my condition, let me do it by gradual and practicable means. I will quit rope dancing, and join the company of players at Naples;

ples ; and, in that situation, wait for the completion of my golden hopes.

I ran over these thoughts, briefly, within myself : and I laid them afterwards, more fully before my patron ; who aproved of my judgment. But there arose another difficulty, which put me to as great a nonplus as ever.— How could I separate myself from Mr. Greenland, without an honourable pretext, which might justify my precipitate conduct in the eyes of the world ? I owed every thing to him. I knew that my parents were yet alive : but I was a total stranger to my father : and I had not seen, nor heard any account of my mother for more than six years. I had left her in the kingdom of Naples ; which was the country where Mr. Greenland took me into his profession. Her disposition, which I have delineated, at the beginning of these Memoirs,

moirs, made her so indifferent about her daughter, that she never enquired after me. If she had been with me, I might have entered upon any course I thought proper; for the company of a mother gives a sanction to any step, to people of my age, and profession. In order, therefore, to proceed in my scheme, of entering into the company, at Naples, it was previously necessary to send for my mother: but this could not be effected, without the assistance of Mr. Greenland, whom I must win over to my purpose, by some specious pretence.

Lord B—— approved of my project; and he did not think the execution of it so difficult as it appeared to me; whose mind was filled with the same timorous respect for Mr. Greenland, as if I had been his daughter. In fact, the Count pointed out to me the most prudent

prudent manner of proceeding. He proposed to me the method we should observe in carrying on our epistolary correspondence; by which it would be undiscoverable to the most inquisitive research: and with a thousand reciprocal expressions of tenderness, we concluded this meeting; which was the occasion of many perplexities to me, and, likewise, of my present happy situation.

CHAP.

C H. A P. XII.

The unexpected arrival of Rosara's mother: the consequences of her strange disposition; and her opposition to Rosara's desires.

FULL of this great design, I was, in the evening, reconducted to my inn: and in the way, I was only taken up with such ideas, as encouraged me to put it in execution. If we are born with a high spirit, it may, for some time, be suppressed, by the rigour of our government: but it will, at length, break forth; and, perhaps, launch beyond the confines of prudence. In the two months of my abode, at Palermo, I had found such a change within myself; and grew so much more enterprizing, every day,

VOL. I. I that,

that, when I reviewed some of my late conduct, it now appeared easy, and familiar: though, a little before, I should have shuddered, merely at the thoughts of it. The prospect of a distant good, with which my love soothed me, made me think the worst consequence of Mr. Greenland's resentment, but a trifling evil. I longed for an interview with him, in which I might unfold my mind to him in the softest manner; and persuade him to give me my liberty: though I should even be obliged to sacrifice the disputed watch, to the ambitious claims of his favourite. It was yet in my hands: but I might now honourably resign it, for my freedom.

So was my disposition of mind,

A more dispassionate view will

rival, ordered me to be called: and I immediately recollected, that his impatience was greater than mine; and that he was eager to know the determination of the affair. In going to his chamber, I met Mrs. Foresta, who gave me a resentful side-look; and passed me without further notice. She received as little salutation from me: for the contempt of my enemies hath always been my strongest shield of defence. Just as I was coming into Mr. Greenland's presence, a curious invention came into my head: I thought I would pretend indisposition to keep him moderate in his temper; and prevent him from exasperating me; if my discourse should happen to displease him. I should as soon have expected death, as to meet with the object I

*...and these will be
...I could say*

this, could not have been given me: for it was just the thing I wanted. How truly may we remark, that fortune makes us her pastime: flying from us when we pursue her; and pursuing us when we fly from her! What would I not have given, a few moments before, to have obtained this dismissal! And yet, a whimsical accident brought it about for me, when I had least expectation of it. I accommodated myself to my circumstances. I assumed an air of concern; and told him, I was sorry we should come to a rupture, for such a trifle. But I took care to quicken my gentleness with two or three poignant expressions, that might bring us mutually

would never contradict. I could lay
little stress upon her steadiness; and,
therefore, my first care was to avail my-
self of her present disposition, which was
so favourable to the execution of my
design. I immediately sent a letter to
Lord B——; and informed him of my
situation: and my mother did not make
the least scruple to carry it in person;
that she might have the pleasure of re-
venging herself. What weight her elo-
quence added to my writing, I know
not: but the issue of that embassy was
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he sent me for answer, that there was a
lodging ready for me, to which I might
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Such was my disposition of mind, when I got home: but that was not the time to execute my intentions. My master, however, informed of my arrival,

rival, ordered me to be called: and I immediately recollected, that his impatience was greater than mine; and that he was eager to know the determination of the affair. In going to his chamber, I met Mrs. Foresta, who gave me a resentful side-look; and passed me without further notice. She received as little salutation from me: for the contempt of my enemies hath always been my strongest shield of defence. Just as I was coming into Mr. Greenland's presence, a curious invention came into my head: I thought I would pretend indisposition to keep him moderate in his temper; and prevent him from exasperating me; if my discourse should happen to displease him. I should as soon have expected death, as to meet with the object I then saw: for it was at the greatest possible distance from my fancy. I found a woman, in his company very

wretchedly equipped; and rather stricken in years; to whom I gave so little heed, that I started back with astonishment, when he introduced her to me, as my mother.

Extravagant combination of chance; who sports with our profoundest reflections; as if she would make us indebted to her for all the good we have in the world! I had puzzled my brains for hours to find how I could persuade my master to send for my mother to me; that I might be enabled, the more easily, to effect the plan, which my lover, and I, had concerted: and lo, she stood there, unexpectedly, before me; without being sent for, by any body: and, I add, against her will.

I soon knew her: for the space of six years, during which, we had been asunder, had not erased her image from my

my memory : and I left her at an age, capable of discernment. The transports of my joy, at this unexpected meeting, were as sensible, as unlooked for : not because I desired to see my mother ; but, because I judged her necessary to the completion of my late resolutions. Every one would imagine her dissolved in maternal tenderness, on this occasion, to excite my pious gratitude. Nothing of this happened. My mother, from the first moment I was capable of knowing her, had given me repeated strokes of the absurd character, which her step-dame, nature, had given her ; and of which I have already drawn a picture.

You see, Rosara, said she, with a smile ; you see I have come to visit you : but the truth is, I was under a necessity of finding you out. I have heard so much of your fame, and prosper-

rity : and you have been so forgetful of the mother who bore you, that I was forced to come hither, in person, to oblige you to discharge your duty, by relieving my extreme wants. Since I have heard you spoken of with applause, even at Rome, you must, certainly, have the world at your disposal : and it is very fit, that you should let your mother have a share of it. Enough for the present : we'll talk of these things more at our leisure. I am glad to see you well : and, since you have been dining sumptuously with your patrons, for God's sake order me some supper : for I have eat nothing for two days ; and very badly for two years.

Whether I was surprized, or not, at this compliment, I will leave the reader to judge : who, perhaps, if he had been in my place, would have fallen
into

into a hearty fit of laughing. The delicacy of my sentiments, would not suffer me so much as to smile, at these vulgar sentiments. I made her no direct answer : but only asked her, why she had not given me previous notice, of her intention to come to Palermo. What, answered she, is there occasion for so much preparative ceremony, when a mother is going to see her daughter? I knew you were well situated : letters are expensive. I heard by a letter, which Mr. Greenland had written to one of his friends at Rome, that you gave very promising hopes in your profession ; and that your success, was even superior to your art. I did not know, how to turn myself to live : for, my husband has not sent me a farthing, for above two years past. I will go, thought I, to my daughter, and make her support me. I sold some furniture, to enable me to make my

I 4 journey.

journey, betwixt Rome, and Naples. At Naples, I took shipping for Palermo, with very little provision : and, two days ago, that little was all spent. Here I am now, wearied out with hunger, cold, fatigue, and want of sleep : hither, I have come, with a determination, to pass the remainder of my life with my daughter ; whose duty it is to maintain me, and treat me like a mother.

Extremely well ; I here replied——but I could say no more : for I was like to laugh. I got up, therefore, to go away : she followed me out of the room :—and Mr. Greenland said nothing to the subject ; but only ordered me to supply her, with what she wanted.——I was now, in a very different situation, from what I lately was ; but not a jot less perplexed : for my mother's humour kept me uneasy ; and

I feared it would be a cause of some disturbance.

The next day, I wrote to Lord B——, and informed him of what had happened. I sent my letter by the conveyance he had pointed out to me: he sent me for answer, that he was very glad to find fortune so favourable to our intentions; and, that he would write that very evening to Naples, and bespeak for me in the company of comedians there, such employment as should be best suited to my taste, and abilities. The resolution seemed to me somewhat premature; because, I did not as yet know, how my mother would relish the scheme. I could now be very courageous with Mr. Greenland; but, I found my spirit fail me, when I wanted to influence my mother's will. We are impressed by nature, with sentiments towards our

parents, which are totally independant of reasoning, and conduct.——A mother, is still a mother: and how extravagant soever, her behaviour is, it will not justify our faults. The world always loudly vindicates the rights of nature, and of heaven. Whatever we may say in our own behalf, against our parents, the world is generally disposed to judge favourably of them. 'Tis true, they are often accountable for our transgressions, by their negligence, or bad examples: but it becomes not us to avenge ourselves of them by harshness, and irreverence.

My mother, if she had thought fit, might now have made me very easy. Had she but cheerfully complied with my proposal, she would have spared me the pain of coming to an open rupture with Mr. Greenland. I thought we might have played the parting scene with

with Mr. Greenland, very speciously, had my mother only pretended, that she again claimed her authority over me, and insisted on my entering, under her care, into the company of comedians at Naples; who had assured her, I should find that step very much to my advantage. Thus, Mr. Greenland's hopes of marrying me, would have been destroyed: thus Lord B——'s application in my favour, would have had its full effect: thus, I should have been entirely mistress of myself, and determined to marry only by my own will.

In short, I unfolded this project to my mother, as artfully as I could; without saying a word to her of my connexion with my patron: but she rung such an absurd peal in my ears, that I was heartily sorry I had spoken to her about the matter.—What a mad

wretch, thou art, said she, that wouldest leave a present certainty for an uncertain prospect! Heaven grant that Mr. Greenland would deign to marry you! For my part, I do not think you deserve so good fortune. Whether that happens or not, you are here treated like a daughter: you are in a family, where you want for nothing; and I am not in a humour to throw away good luck; and, instead of being genteely waited upon, to ramble about, and serve a romantick theatrical dame, without a farthing to succour me. What a ridiculous whim is this! Who the devil has put these fantastick notions into your head? Where are all your magnificent patrons, whom I have heard spoken of even at Rome? For you do not seem to me to have the value of two crowns upon your back. I shall take care to rectify this nonsense with my authority. I will not have hens
in

in the house, that lay no eggs: I shall rid you of those shining fops, who ruin the character of young girls, without so much, as making them a present of a gown. Mr. Greenland and I shall settle the matter. I am in need of every thing; and I will not any more go rambling after my husband for a support, and show myself as mad as he. Right reckoning makes long friends: let me be treated like what I am; and then let Mr. Greenland marry you to-morrow if he pleases: for, I shall not only agree to it myself; but, likewise, insist on your consent. Imagine to yourself, whether or no, I have come hither from Rome to go strolling about the world with Madam Actress, and serving in quality of her domestic.

I was confounded beyond expression, with this peal of insolence, folly, and vulgarity. I had a thousand arguments
at

at my tongue's end, that might have confuted her stuff: but, to what purpose should I have produced them, when I saw she was too weak, to comprehend them? I, therefore, only shrugged up my shoulders, and told her, I was sorry I had met with a mother, who was likely to be my torment. But this reply, had almost made her blab my secret intentions, to the whole family. Cruelly agitated with this embarrassment, and opposition to my aim, I was going to write that very day to Lord B——; and inform him of my disaster. As I knew not how to extricate myself from this difficulty, I was under a necessity of applying to him for assistance. I had even sat down to begin my letter: but, fortune had a mind to amuse herself with my satisfaction, as well as my calamity. She gave birth to an accident, that wrought so absolute a change in the
mind

mind of my mother, that she begged of me with tears in her eyes, to put the proposal into execution; which a little before, she had, with such obstinacy opposed.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

*An odd Accident makes Rosara's Mother
insist upon her leaving Mr. Greenland's
Company.*

I Have now come to that part of my
Memoirs, which includes the second
period of life. It introduces the subject
of that part I have acted in the drama
of this world. Whoever could live here
below, as a mere spectator of what hap-
pens to others, would save much in-
quietude: but every one must, like-
wise, play his own part: without which,
he lives useless to society; and cannot,
in a moral sense, be said to live at all.
The parts we exhibit, in this wide thea-
tre, are very different: but they all
agree in one particular: in their being

a constant mixture, of good and evil. Colours have their shade; and light has its shadow: for these contrasts give a relief to each other. An uninterrupted series of felicity, is a chimera, which is incompatible with the constitution of human nature. A perpetual train of misfortunes, is, I may venture to assert, impossible: because the weakness of our frame would make us sink under the burden. Those accidents, which we call evils, are frequently only imaginary ones: for even with good fortune we are never sufficiently satisfied. What we call good, very often does not deserve the name: and it is only mistaken for such, by our passions, which are blind. If we were not hurried on, by them, to unfair conclusions, we should find, that Providence has distributed to mankind a very just proportion of joy, and sorrow. If we see a person happy, we have no reason to infer

fer, he always has been so; or always will. If we see another man miserable, we are not to suppose, that he has never been happy; or that he is always to be wretched. The division of enjoyments and sufferings, is equitable to the highest degree: for it is apportioned by an omniscient and impartial God. Sometimes, by his impenetrable dispositions, we see dealt out, to the same person, a long succession of misfortunes: and, sometimes, on the contrary, a chain of prosperity: and the beholders, misled by those glaring incidents, pronounce us absolutely fortunate, or unhappy. But, if we could minutely survey the whole lives of individuals, we should see their share of happiness brought more to a level; and we should not find any one of the unfortunate, without his portion of good; nor any person, amongst the prosperous, without a large allotment of evil.

My

My own experience has led me to this speculation : and what I am going to deliver, will tend to prove, that its lessons have been just. My mother's temper seemed, to me an evil ; which directly ran counter to my desires : and yet, in the end, it turned out the readiest means to effect them. I have, already, told the reader, that she would not suffer me to leave Mr. Greenland : and I shall now acquaint him how she changed her humour : and became the principal cause of a separation ; which, a little before, I was afraid would be impracticable.

Our people dined, as usual, in common, at one table : where each, without ceremony, helped themselves, as they thought proper. A violent head-ach prevented me, that day, from going to dinner : however, my sensible mother trudged away, even before she was called.

called. As I was not with her, I could not do the honours of the table to her: and the rest did not think it incumbent upon them to take any particular notice of her, as she was not an infant, and did not stand in need of being fed. She was so extravagantly foolish, as not to eat a bit, during all the time of dinner; because it did not come into any body's head to desire her to help herself as she liked: and when it was over, she fell into a ridiculous fit of crying, and sobbing; as if they looked upon her with an evil eye, and grudged her a meal. I was extremely surprized, when she flew into my room, like a mad woman, and stunned me with her furious complaints. It was with great difficulty I made her calm enough to give me a distinct account of what had happened: but when she had given it me, I had yet more difficulty to abstain from laughter. She called the whole house

a nest of blood-sucking barbarians; who had a design upon her life; and were for starving her, although they had been enriched by the industry of her daughter. She would not stay a moment longer with such inhuman savages; though we should go together, and beg our bread. She declared, that all the condescension in the world should not make her alter her determination: that she would immediately make Mr. Greenland acquainted with it; and absolutely insist upon having her daughter away from him; and that she would not acknowledge me for such, if I did not solemnly revenge her wrong, and instantaneously demand my dismissal.

This indignation was foolish, and without the least foundation: but it was not my business to show my disapprobation of it: because I should then have opposed my own design.

I looked upon her violent resentment, as a favourable stroke of fortune; who was executing my advantage, out of the weakness of my mother. If I omitted this opportunity, I was afraid I should not find such another. There was no occasion for me to charge Mr. Greenland with a fault; which was inconsistent with his generous character: neither needed I to defend him, at the expence, perhaps, of my own convenience. I affected a perfect neutrality for each party. I suffered my mother to give way to her anger: and I anxiously waited for its effects. They corresponded exactly with my wishes. Mr. Greenland, stung to the quick, with a censure he had not deserved, in the warmth of his replies, lost sight of decorum. His reproaches were followed by the still more illiberal sarcasms of his domestics; who, envying my good fortune in
the

the company, were glad to have any hold against me; though even through my mother's fault.

The fire was now thoroughly lighted: and a small spark had produced a flame. My mother, now throwing aside all restraint, and reason, discharged a volley of that acrimonious abuse, such as the rabble in the street bespatter each other with. Thus I, to support the character of a daughter, was obliged to take the part of a mother; whose phrenzy had now made her act contrary to the resolves of her calmer humour; and opened me the way to liberty. Thus, in short, had the tumult got to such a head, that Mr. Greenland, to the secret satisfaction of all the rest, acquainted me, that I must either get rid of my mother, or provide myself employment in some other company, as soon as the Carnival was over. For, at that time,

I might depend on being discharged out of the company : and, therefore, I must take care to provide for myself in some other.

A more favourable intimation, than this, could not have been given me : for it was just the thing I wanted. How truly may we remark, that fortune makes us her pastime : flying from us when we pursue her ; and pursuing us when we fly from her ! What would I not have given, a few moments before, to have obtained this dismissal ! And yet, a whimsical accident brought it about for me, when I had least expectation of it. I accommodated myself to my circumstances. I assumed an air of concern ; and told him, I was sorry we should come to a rupture, for such a trifle. But I took care to quicken my gentleness with two or three poignant expressions, that might bring us mutually

tually under a necessity of parting. My mother exulted, at seeing herself supported, and vindicated: and all that day I was her dear daughter; whom she would never leave; and whose will she would never contradict. I could lay little stress upon her steadiness; and, therefore, my first care was to avail myself of her present disposition, which was so favourable to the execution of my design. I immediately sent a letter to Lord B——; and informed him of my situation: and my mother did not make the least scruple to carry it in person; that she might have the pleasure of revenging herself. What weight her eloquence added to my writing, I know not: but the issue of that embassy was as favourable to my desires, as I could have wished. About two hours after, he sent me for answer, that there was a lodging ready for me, to which I might repair when I pleased: that I should

there be supplied with every convenience: and that, as soon as the Carnival was over, I might depend upon being employed, on good terms, in the company at Naples.

I had just got to the point I wished for. But, in the step I was going to make, it was my business to avoid appearances; for on them depends the opinion of the world: and they who neglect it, only live to discredit themselves. Since the world will be deceived, we must deceive it: and its esteem costs but little, when it only costs an innocent fraud. Indeed, it often obliges us to oppose and thwart our passions: but this internal controul, by degrees, brings these sovereigns of our will under our subjection. It is impossible to please every one. However, to show that we are disposed to give universal satisfaction, is so easy a matter, that it depends

depends entirely on ourselves. I own, the world is so bold, that it presumes to judge even of our very thoughts. But, as it passes sentence only from external appearances, it is a judge whom we ought not to fear: because it is always subject to be misled, by the artifice of a lie.

Those reflections, which even at that time had a good deal of influence over my mind, made me very cautious in my present circumstances; and determined me not to sacrifice the good opinion of others to a giddy passion. I was now under a necessity of taking a step, which I had been so desirous of having in my power: but, at the same time, I thought it behoved me to seem unwilling to go away, that I might not expose my secret motives to public censure. On my mother's return, I went to my master, almost with tears in my

eyes, and told him, that, as it was his pleasure, I was ready to obey him; and leave his house immediately, with my mother. I added, that my services were, however, entitled to some reward; that, without it, I should be at a loss how to support myself in town; that I believed him too equitable to refuse it me; but that, on the other hand, I was too much obliged to him to prescribe any measure to his bounty; that whatever he should be pleased to give me, would be superior to my deserts, and only correspondent to his generous disposition.

I had foreseen, that Mr. Greenland's resentment would subside; and that he would never carry those extremes into execution; which, no doubt, he thought that I, on my part, would rather endeavour to evade than promote. He answered me somewhat surprized, and with more than usual gravity,—that he
not

was not an indiscreet man:—that there was no occasion to precipitate a resolution which might carry along with it very bad consequences:—that my mother was a gross fool;—and, he was extremely sorry I should suffer on her account:—that I should seriously admonish her, and endeavour to bring her to decency, and reason:—however, if I thought it best to part from him, to give my enemies an opportunity of laughing at me, and to make myself the public talk, I might act as I chose; for he did not want to put any restraint on my inclinations, or liberty.

This was beating a retreat, from a dangerous attack, without hazarding the honour of victory: but I, after the fray was begun, was for carrying on the conflict: in order to terminate the war.—I made him a complaisant reply; and left him, with a resolution

depart immediately from his house :
where, if I stayed a moment longer, I
forefaw, that my unthinking mother,
would have ingloriously capitulated,
and furrendered.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

New Benefits conferred on Rosara, by Lord B——. The ridiculous Behaviour of her Mother gives her great Uneasiness.

PALERMO was, that very day, full of the adventure; and, how much soever they might blame my mother, they were far from being severe upon me, for forming such a a hasty and determined resolution, in her defence. Mr. Greenland was charged with imprudence, for having involved a daughter in the fault of her mother; from whom he had reason to expect such great advantage. The world was prejudiced in my behalf: and, when the world is prejudiced, we are not to ex-

pect, that the opinion will be formed upon right reason. When we are high in public favour, arguments are found to justify all our defects. Scarce any will own themselves deceived in their opinion: for there are few, who are such tenacious friends to truth, and of such a noble nature, as to confess their errors, without a blush. We are obstinate, to a degree, in supporting our most indigested notions; even in spite of demonstration; and, in our gloomy splenetic arrogance, we insist upon our infallibility. When we have once obtained the admiration of the world, the world continues to support us; not so much to preserve our credit, as to justify its own capricious taste.

As the public was won over to my side, by the approbation of a few, who, perhaps, had been more influenced by novelty, and fancy, than reason, it insisted,

sisted, that I had acted, in this affair, just as I ought; and threatned Mr. Greenland with a thousand inconveniences, and losses, for having parted with me: as if I had been the support of the company; which, however, afterwards, although I was out of it, made a great noise, wherever it went. How are we blinded, by a presumptuous confidence, in our own judgment! The public knows no medium: and easily falls into the extreme, of an enthusiastic adoration, or brutal outrage. Notwithstanding the force of self-adulation, I must own, I think the company lost nothing by my leaving it: and yet, to believe the public clamour, there was no further subsistence for it, without me.—Thanks to Heaven! I knew myself. However, the favourable judgment of the world was of great service to me; as it rendered Mr. Greenland much more obstinate, against attempting a re-

union; and kept the secret reasons, why I left him, entirely concealed from public view.

I passed the rest of the Carvinal in a state of tranquility, which I had never known before. I found, during that time, I had no more than what was barely necessary to support me: but, in a few days after, thro' the bounty of Lord B——, I had even a superfluity. I was abundantly provided with whatever my vanity could wish for: but I had the prudence to make no parade with it: for my former companions had already raised surmises, even from my simpler manner of dress, which tended to my dishonour. I put equal restraint upon myself, in receiving visits from the Count, my patron; which, at that time, my sense of reputation only made me avoid. How dear soever his presence was to me;—how much soever it was

was my interest to keep alive his affection for me, I was determined the world should not have room to imbitter my private hopes with its malignity. I might have pronounced myself content in my new situation, if my mother had not frequently disturbed me, with her extravagancies. Instead of being a help to me, as mothers in general are, to people of my profession, she was an insupportable trouble to me: nor durst I allay the pain she gave me, by lamentation.

I would have defied the most prudent woman in the world to have kept her quiet. As if she had entirely forgotten her late condition, I could not prevent her, with all my care and assiduity, from continually repining at her present state. Agitated with fretfulness, to a degree of frenzy, she scarce saw a pin about me, without envying me the use of it. It

was a continual mortification to me, that, whenever Lord B—— made me a present, she had the boldness to tell him, that a great deal of pother was made about me; but that she was never taken into consideration. Generous man that he was! he never needed to be twice upbraided in that manner!— and I had the mortification of seeing him, every day, put to double expence, to keep an inconsiderate wretch easy; who had not sense enough to measure her claims by her station, and age.

When I called to mind, in what a trim she at first presented herself to my view, on her arrival from Rome. I could not but laugh at seeing her stuck out with ornaments, that blazened their own impropriety. It was in vain to represent to her that delicacy, which the world exacts, in our preservation of a good name; because she was insolent
and

and incorrigible in her humour. The more simple I was in my apparel, the more reserved I was in my conversation; the more gallant and gay she affected to appear, and the more she made herself the subject of ridicule. It was extremely droll, to see a woman, who had never known what dress was before, wrinkled with age, stand for an hour, at a glass, to adjust her system of Dutch magnificence.

She often used to appear in one of my rose-coloured negligees, preposterously tucked up, with a black cardinal, and a velvet capuchin upon that; with rows of Dresden ruffles on her arms; and a riding-hat, in the English taste, upon her head; seeming to intimate, that her finery would have been still more superb, if she could have found room for more ornaments. To complete her absurdity, she would often
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in this heroic attire, stand, for hours together, at the door, or in the street, chattering with the low women of the neighbourhood; and entering into the closest familiarity with them; forgetting the dignity of her dress.

It was often my misfortune to behold this ridiculous scene: nor did I get any satisfaction, by showing myself displeased with it: for that circumstance alone, made her more fond of exposing herself. No part of her odd conduct, gave me so much uneasiness as this: though, in other respects, she often gave me a great deal of trouble. We never could find any thing we wanted, if she had happened to lay it by. If I remonstrated against this negligence, in the gentlest manner, she would tell me, that she was not my servant; and that if I had a mind to have things done, in my way, I should do them myself. In short,

short, though my circumstances were now favourable in the main, I had yet my discontent. Such is the fluctuating, imperfect lot of mortality: and no human prudence can foresee such accidents, or exempt itself from them.

The Carnival, at last, ended: and Mr. Greenland's company was preparing to leave Palermo: where I had but a few days longer to stay, before I set off to Naples, to enter upon my new employment. I went and wished Mr. Greenland a good journey: but I did not wait on him, purely with a view to pay him a compliment; but, only, to hear what he would say to me; and see what recompense he would make me for my service. From the time of our parting, he had allowed me a ducat a day: but I thought I was yet entitled to something more. He received me with uncommon reserve: not a word
was

was spoken about the watch : because Mrs. Foresta was more pleased with the notion of having me at a distance from her, than if he had given her a treasure. He made a polite return to my compliments : but I took my leave of him empty-handed, and without the least hope that he would give me any thing before his departure. But, in this I was mistaken : for he came, next day, to return my visit : and, as my good fortune would have it, Lord B—— was with me, at the time ; and his presence saved me the pain of hearing, or retorting, any disagreeable expressions. Before he took his leave of me, he put into my hand fifty chequins, desiring me to accept of them, as a small testimony of his gratitude, and obligations. I thanked him, in terms of equal complaisance : and thus we parted, never to meet again.

Mr.

Mr. Greenland, and his company, left Palermo, a few days after; but I could not have found in my heart to leave my beneficent patron so soon, had not the consideration of his tenderness to his mother, and a regard for my own reputation, obliged me to hasten my departure. There are few things, that can be concealed from the eyes of the world. My separation from the company had made some noise in Palermo. There is an idle set of people, who spend most of their time in prying into the origin of those accidents, which furnish their empty heads with topics of discourse. Lord B——'s partiality for me was but too visible. His visits were believed to be more frequent, than, in fact, they were: for, on such occasions, the censorious, from one time, infer a thousand. Our connexion was so much talked of, that it was, at length, whispered to his mother; who was extremely

tremely disgusted at it. She was one of the most exemplary ladies in the country: but, at the same time, one of those rigid, antique matrons, who are always running out in the praise of past times; and in exclamations against the present; though they are not at all acquainted with its manners. Many of these kind of ladies, however, abandon the world, only because they perceive it abandons them: and they abandon it, soured with discontent; which makes them always speak ill of it afterwards. Nay, women betake themselves even to solitude, from a vain desire to distinguish themselves from others, by retirement, and devotion, when they can no longer attract notice, by the flower of youth, and beauty. A vanity of this kind is incurable: because the cloak of rigid virtue, which it wears, takes from it every appearance of vice; and screens it from the censure of the world.

I do not say, that the mother of Lord B—— was a person of this kind: because I did not know her sufficiently to pronounce upon her. I shall only say that she passed, in Palermo, for a paragon, of retired life: and, that it was the interest of the Count, her son, to pay a nice deference to her opinions. As she was absolute mistress of a large dowry, and a fine estate, she kept him continually upon his guard; lest she should dispose of her wealth, in favour of some other person. He was the apple of her eye: but she had her maternal tenderness so much under command, that she did not make the least discovery of it to him, on any occasion. Lady A——, my Lord's only sister, had a young son, who was the delight, and chief amusement of his grandmother. Whether the artful old lady was at all fond of this child, or whether she pretended more love for it than she really had, certain it is,

is, this rival made the Count more assiduous to please his mother, to strengthen his pretensions to the inheritance.

His regard for me was a dangerous rock ; which kept him, every moment, in fear of shipwreck. There were not wanting idle tattlers, to inform his mother of the frequent visits he made me ; for which, he had her severe reproofs. This alarmed him, and put him upon hastening my departure from Palermo. He soothed me with all possible tenderness, at the time he proposed it ; and assured me, that he would visit me at Naples, as soon as he could get the least pretence for going thither. When I parted with him, I thought I was torn from myself. Notwithstanding the solemn protestations of his love, which he renewed, I was not secure, and at ease : for, I could not think myself, in any degree, worthy of such good fortune,

tune. How could I then imagine that I should have many storms to encounter before our next meeting! Hapless mortals, that we are! could our bounded views presage the future, the most golden moments of our life, would be a prey to mental torments!

C H A P.

C H A P. XIV.

*Account of the Company of Comedians, at
Naples.*

WHEN I arrived at Naples, Lord B—'s letters had got thither before me; and recommended me very warmly to the company of players. It was agreed upon, that I should begin with inferior characters; and such as were best suited to my age, and inexperience. As I was totally unpractised in the art, I stood much in need of instruction; and, indeed, it was given me with all possible assiduity, and candour. So that this company entirely belied the ignominious character of their profession. I speak in this manner, because all the players, I had hitherto known, made me form a very poor

poor opinion of this way of life. Italy was over-run with hungry, strolling companies, who, without abilities, or education, imposed upon the simplicity of the vulgar; and lived profusely, at their expence. Every art has it's beginning, middle state, and perfection. To speak to a large company, met together for their entertainment, is, certainly, a very difficult matter. For, must not it require very uncommon talents to call forth, to put in action, to be an absolute lord over the human affections? There was a time (I have been told, by those, who were well acquainted with the subject) when dramatical representation was in the hands of a few geniuses, of whom nature had been very sparing in every age. But nature was, of late, in the eye of self-conceit, so fruitful of these prodigies, that every plebeian, of the most abject education, if he could only articulate,

ticulate, and repeat words like a parrot, arrogated to himself the respectable name of an actor; and profaned the stage with his insipid, unmeaning sing-song.

I myself, likewise, had seen such buffoonery, and stupidity of action, upon the stage, as excited contempt, and pity. Accounts were, frequently, given me, so little favourable to that profession, that I had conceived as despicable an opinion of it, as of jugglers, and mountebanks. I can, with pleasure, truly say, I have observed, that, with regard to this object, as well as others, a general rule undergoes its exceptions;—that, even amongst players, there were companies jealous of their reputation: and that the Italian theatre might hope for great improvements, if the influence of our good Italian actors was once a little more diffused.

diffused. The observation, that every merchant praises his own wares, has no place here: nor am I for praising, at all events, the company in which I myself acquired some reputation. My words are animated with a spirit of truth; and justified by the universal suffrage of Italy. I need not name the head of this company: he is sufficiently known: nor is it to be supposed, that I should have the audacity to lie, concerning a person, with whom the public is well acquainted. If I speak well of the company, I do it but justice: and let those of my readers, who are thoroughly acquainted with it, determine, whether or no, I stick to truth in the minute description, which I am here going to give of it.

The company of Mr. Marbell (so I think proper to name him, for many good reasons) was made up of eight

principal persons : the rest are not worth my taking any particular notice of. The first woman was sweet in her temper ; sweeter yet, in her manner of speaking ; but most ravishingly sweet, in her expression of the passions. She was of a sickly constitution ; of a disposition correspondent to the infirmities of her body ; that is to say, melancholy, and pathetic : all her attention was engrossed by the theatre, to which she had been bred ; and for which she had so great an affection, that by hindering her from acting you would have thrown her into a fever. I may truly say, that this was her predominant passion. It was the same with the rest of the women. Instead of being addicted to idle curiosity, scandal, vanity, or intrigue ; they devoted themselves wholly to the pursuit of their profession. This seemed to promise, that the art of playing, had
made,

made, or would make a great progress in a short time.

The character of the second was expressly formed, by nature, to be opposed to that of the first; and to give that same force, and life to the drama, which colours, and shades, give to the pictures of the best masters. In proportion, as the one was tender, and melting, the other was haughty, and majestic: but with all her majesty she was not deaf to the soft whispers of love. Her make was as firm, and robust, as the others was genteel, and slender. Her voice was as strong, and sonorous, as the others was languishing, and gentle. They were both endowed with a happy memory; and they were both pushed on to excellence by a warm, and generous emulation.

The husband of the last mentioned person, used to play the part of a lover; and nature had given him talents that would have made him an excellent orator, if he had bestowed upon them the diligence they deserved. Why he did not apply himself as he ought, I know not; for he might have applied himself much more: and whoever takes no care to complete himself in his profession, to the utmost of his power, has no right to repine, if his talents are not cherished with applause. There are none without their defects: and my friend must not be offended, if I write my sentiments of him; since I only write them for his good. Besides, I do not unite any thing that throws a stain upon his moral character.

A young man of an engaging aspect, a harmonious voice, of an easy graceful manner, and great vivacity,
played

played the part of pantaloön : he had talents that gained him applause, and qualities which made him beloved. Friendly, and generous, even beyond his circumstances; bold, enterprizing, and all ardour, no less for his own honour, than for the interest of the society. The clown was a master of his part; and truly admirable in many characters very different from that in which he generally appeared.—Possessed of a strong, and flexible voice, and with the utmost energy of expression, he exhibited, in himself, such opposite characters, that, on different evenings, one could not believe him the same person. The other two, who played harlequin, and the doctor, were not prodigies; but they did very well well with the rest. Complete harmony must have it's treble, and it's bass: and, in every society, some of it's mem-

bers must be people of middling qualifications.

Mr. Marbell, the head, and director of the company, generally took the first part: but he excelled, particularly, in representing the most grotesque, and ridiculous originals. In this talent he had not, and will not, readily have his equals. His very figure, and voice, contributed not a little to make him excel in such characters. He applied himself to study, as much as the multiplicity of his affairs would permit: and he was well acquainted with polite learning, to which the generality of his profession are altogether strangers. Hence he understood the full force of the words he was to repeat; and the action with which they should be accompanied. But these were his inconsiderable qualifications, when we compare them with his prudent,

dent, and honourable conduct. Imagine to yourselves, a society of persons, highly untractable by difference of country, inclinations, and manners; and they would not be so ticklish, and difficult to manage as a company of comedians. All the ties of interest, friendship, and blood, are, frequently not sufficient to keep them united. Every one fancies himself necessary to the subsistence of the rest; and, therefore, he aspires, either to be a Pompey, or a Cæsar; without a superior, or without an equal. Regardless of future consequences, and emboldened with the notion of their own merit, if they happen to meet with a spurt of applause, they grow immediately discontented, and insatiable. Discord, punctilio, contest, are the soul of their association: and they think themselves idle, and neglectful of their rights, if they are not always complaining of

their governor.——Then they are so full of ridiculous prejudices with regard to the laws, and customs of their profession, that they make every trifle a matter of state; and they would rather sacrifice bread, and life itself, than give up a tittle of those privileges, which commonly have no better foundation than their vanity, and ignorance.

It must, however, be acknowledged that Mr. Marbell was quite master of his business; and managed a set of these fantastic people with so much moderation, and prudence, that his players lived together like so many brothers. They were zealous, and vigilant, to the highest degree; for the honour, and interest of their master; and he was no less anxious, and careful to keep them content. Fired with a noble design,

sign, which entitles him to a place in these memoirs, and in the memory of posterity ; the design of raising the Italian stage from the vile, and abject state, in which it had been sunk, for many ages ; he did not spare, when he first arranged his plan, any preparatives, that might tend, however slowly, to effect his laudable intention. Besides encouraging the poets by honourable rewards, to bring back the ancient good taste to the theatre, he was the first, who was instrumental in abolishing those ridiculous laws, and customs which are destructive of dramatical composition.

He saw, that it was impossible for players to be good, while confined within the limits of the poetical art ; and, at the same time, for players to be satisfied. Each would not only have the first part, but his presumption often
blinds

blinds him, to such a degree, that he would have the part which was exactly most opposite to his particular talents. Heaven forefend that a theatrical dame, or hero should so far sink beneath their dignity, as to suffer the plot of the piece to turn upon an inferior character, and an inferiour player. Actors often dislike to take odious characters; as if they should be hurt by the poetical created aversion of the public, without reflecting that we easily, and necessarily distinguish betwixt the temporary character, and the real man. Nay, such is sometimes the stupidity of those human machines, that they play a part with reluctance, because they know not it's real spirit, and tendency: and are afterwards obliged to own, that they really understood it not; and were surprized to find it applauded.

Should

Should we examine all the pretensions of players, we should find, that if they were paid regard to, every theatrical piece would be written in a rude, Gothic taste, or formed on the same model. What does a principal actress lose by representing a mother upon the stage, though, perhaps, she is an unmarried young woman, when every body knows, that as soon as the curtain falls, she is as much a maid, and as blooming, as she was before? Does a second-rate player, lose any of her merit, because she is treated as an old woman for an hour or two, in fiction, or in sport? Do not we all know at the end of the comedy, that she is still young enough to have her gallants? How many idle murmurs, and complaints did I hear, which would have entirely ruined Mr. Marbell's plan, if he had not, with his art, and authority, brought his company, by degrees, to
think

think more justly of these matters and to distinguish themselves eminently from other comedians.

I think I bestow the highest eulogium on him, when I say, that he seems to have been born on purpose for this critical undertaking; and, if Italy is sensible, that its theatre is very much improved, it owes all the praise for that improvement to him; as he was the first theatrical enterprizer, who adventured so wisely, and so far.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

